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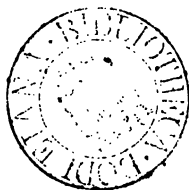
SPANISH LITERATURE.

SPANISH LITERATURE.

BY

ALEXANDER F. FOSTER.

12



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PREFACE.

In the following pages the author has endeavoured briefly to trace the early progress of the Spanish intellect, and to mark its premature decay under the blighting influence of civil and religious despotism. He has gathered for the English reader some of the promising flowers that bloomed in its best days, with the melancholy regret that little of a more substantial nature was produced. If, however, these gleanings appear rather curiously interesting than directly instructive or useful, there are salutary lessons to be learned in endeavouring thus to catch the leading features of the national literature, and to view them in connection with those of the national history. The attentive reader will not fail to discover what were the circumstances that proved so fatal to the progress of this gifted people; and he may be led more justly to appreciate that freedom, the growth of which, in his own country, has been accompanied with a corresponding development of whatever is at once substantial and elegant in the productions of the human mind.

As this little work is of a strictly popular character, it professes to contain neither profound nor original criticism. The aim has been to condense and embody for general readers whatever has been most judiciously said by eminent critics, German, French, and English, as well as Spanish; and to exhibit the result rather than follow the process of their investigations. Those who desire a more extensive and elaborate work, are referred to that of Mr Ticknor, whose volumes would have afforded much valuable assistance in the preparation of the present work had they appeared before it was written. As it was, they served chiefly to enable the author, in revising his sheets for the press, to verify or correct a few dates and minor particulars which had not been satisfactorily ascertained by previous writers.

With respect to the specimens, the translations in prose are, with scarcely an exception, original; as are most of those in blank verse, and a few of the lyrics. In the last-mentioned class, where a happy version had been attained by some previous student of Spanish literature, the author has preferred it to any fresh effort of his own. In this way he has to acknowledge particular obligations to Dr Bowring, whose 'Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain' contains a large number of happily-selected pieces translated into English with singular beauty and fidelity.*

* The following hints on Spanish pronunciation may be interesting to youthful readers:—

The vowels *a, e, i, o, u*, are uniformly pronounced as in the English words *far, fell, marine, open, full*.

b as in English, but softer, the lips scarcely touching each other, nearly as *v*.

c before *e* and *i*, as *th* in *think, thin*; but before *a, o*, and *u*, as *k*.

ch as *ch* in *church*.

d and *t* as in English, but allowing the tongue to touch the upper teeth.

f as in English.

g before *a, o*, and *u*, as in *go, give*; but before *e* and *i*, as *h* in *alcohol*.

h is silent, except before the diphthong *ue*, when it is very slightly breathed.

j has the guttural sound of *g* in every position—namely, an *h* formed in the throat.

k and *l* as in English; but *ll* or *l̄*, as *gl* in *seraglio*, or *lli* in *million*.

m and *n* as in English; but *ñ*, as *gn* in Italian and French, or *ni* in *union*.

p as in English; and *q*, which is *now* used only in the syllables *que* and *qui*, is pronounced as a soft *k*; *que* and *qui* are pronounced *kay* and *kee*. *Cua, cue, cui, cuo*, are pronounced *kwoah, kway, kwee, kwoo*.

r as *rr* in *error*, strongly trilled; and *s* as in *so, sin*, but never as *z*.

v as in English; *x* as in *box*; but formerly it sounded guttural in many words, and was interchangeable with *j*, or *g* before *e* and *i*.

y consonant, as in *yon, you, yes*; but as a vowel, as *i* in Spanish.

z, in every case, as *th* in *thin, think*; same sound as *c* before *e* and *i*.

In Spanish, diphthongs and triphthongs are enunciated so as to render perceptible each vowel, with its proper sound as noted above, but closely pronounced, so as to form but one syllable.

As a *general rule*, all words ending in a consonant (except surnames in *ez* which are accented on the penult) have the accent on the *last syllable*; and those in a vowel, on the *last but one*. In accurately-printed Spanish, all words (except verbs) which differ from this *general rule*, have the acute accent (') placed over the accented vowel. The rules of accentuation peculiar to verbs could be useful only to the initiated, who do not require them here.

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SPANISH LITERATURE.

INTRODUCTION.

OF all European countries, Spain is confessedly that whose early literature offers the greatest variety of interesting objects, and possesses, from the period of the decline of the Roman power, the richest materials to reward the inquiries of the antiquary, to sustain the enthusiasm of the poet, and to give energy to the details of the chronicler.

The history of Spanish literature may be properly divided into four periods. The first contains all that portion which precedes the fourteenth century, and includes the rise and progress of the Spanish language, with the poems and romances of which it was the vehicle, while yet in a rude and ungrammatical state. The second displays its gradual improvement during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and shows the nation opening its own way, and making its initiatory efforts in the various departments of literary composition. In this period the first dramatists, and numerous prose writers, appear; while the poets manifest an acquaintance with the rules of grammar and versification. At this era too, the Oriental spirit, which became the distinguishing characteristic of Spanish poetry, appears strongly prevalent. The third period is introduced by Boscan and the influence of Italian literature, and displays from the beginning of the sixteenth till the middle of the seventeenth century the full strength and maturity of the Spanish mind. In the fourth we trace the gradual decline which began in the middle of the seventeenth century, and has unfortunately continued till the present time.

FIRST PERIOD.

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TILL THE END OF THE THIRTEENTH
CENTURY.

ORIGIN OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

The origin of the Spanish language is a subject of inquiry fraught with considerable interest to the philologist. A careful comparison between the Basque of Spain, the remains of the ancient Breton and Armoric languages, and some very old inscriptions found in Italy, has induced eminent philologists to conclude, that long before the historic era the south and west of Europe were pervaded by one mother-tongue, though probably including several dialects. With respect to its subsequent history, a very commonly-received opinion has been, that the inhabitants of these countries, after their subjugation by the Romans, adopted and used exclusively the Latin of the conquerors; and that, at the dismemberment of the empire in the fifth and sixth centuries, the Goths, Vandals, Alans, and others, introduced a part of their vocabulary, the greater portion still remaining Latin, while the grammar was formed by mutual concessions.

But there are serious, and, we think, insuperable objections to this view of the origin of the Romance languages. In the first place, it is gratuitous, and contrary to all analogy, to suppose that Italy, Spain, Gaul, and Rhetia, utterly abandoned their vernacular tongues for the Latin; there being no example on record of a nation thus acting, except under the influence of the strongest compulsion. Now while it is certain that the Romans zealously encouraged and promoted the cultivation of their classic language in the provinces as a means of civilisation, their labours in this respect were confined chiefly to the influential classes of society; and there is no reason to suppose that they interfered with the masses, or forbade the conquered nations to use their native dialects in their ordinary intercourse. Probably in Dacia alone, where a war of extermination was carried on against the native inhabitants, did the aboriginal language wholly disappear.

At a subsequent stage of our inquiry we encounter another difficulty. On the supposition that the Romans did pursue this policy, and that they succeeded in establishing the Latin to the exclusion of all the indigenous tongues, it is difficult to account

for the mode in which the languages of Southern Europe were afterwards reconstructed. They are formed on a system common to them all, but strikingly different from the Roman basis. The common predominance of Latin roots in French, Italian, and Spanish, is not more striking than the similarity of structure to which we are referring; and the question which occurs is, whether this common structure arose fortuitously during the deterioration of the Latin in the middle ages, or whether these nations inherited it from some mother-tongue which they had possessed in common before the Roman conquest, and according to the genius of which they had always modified the language of their conquerors. A declinable language becomes indeclinable; the passive inflections disappear; the tenses are formed by new combinations; the Latin, which was so rich in inflections and inversions, assumes a plain and direct construction; and all this is effected without any common literature, yet on uniform principles, and throughout an immense extent of country, teeming with a heterogeneous population, and subject to conquerors of various races and tongues. Such a revolution is, we believe, unparalleled in the history of languages.

The only escape from these difficulties, is to suppose that the inhabitants of the south of Europe never abandoned the idiom of their mother-tongue; and that, though from the Romans and other nations by whom they were subjugated a great many new words were derived, yet these were generally modified in conformity with the genius of the vernacular; and thus were gradually formed and matured the modern languages of these countries. They received the name of *Romane* or *Romance*, probably because they were used by those who enjoyed the privilege of Roman citizenship, and were composed to a great extent of Latin roots.

THE ROMAN CONQUEST.

In tracing the process by which the Spanish language was formed, the influence of the Latin conquest about 200 years before Christ is that which first demands our attention. For though, long before this era, the shores of Spain had received colonies from Phœnicia and Carthagina, yet, except in a few names of places, it is difficult to trace any well-marked impress left by them on the dialects of the Peninsula.

Of all the countries subjugated by the Roman arms without suffering the extermination of its inhabitants, Spain was that in which the language of the conquerors obtained the most rapid and extensive ascendancy. In no other had the imperial city so many flourishing colonies, and in none could the classic language boast

of a larger number of renowned poets* and eloquent orators. The Spanish vernacular is said to have consisted of many different dialects, and to have possessed no general, fixed, or national idiom to resist the progress of philological innovation. Nevertheless, every Latin word in the Spanish language proves, that whatever modifications the indigenous roots were subject to, these were imposed on the Latin transplants also, so that all the servile and accessory parts became purely Spanish. There was, besides, a wide difference originally between the Spanish and the Roman articulation; and it appears that the former maintained its peculiarities. If a Latin word contained a letter not found in the Spanish alphabet, the one nearest it in sound was substituted; and when either initial or medial consonants appeared harsh, they were changed or associated with others more conformable to Spanish notions of harmony.† Thus the genius of the mother-tongue was preserved, and the Latin became deteriorated by the assimilations to which it was subject.

* One of the earliest Christian writers that has any claim to the title of a poet was Aurelius Prudentius, a native of Spain. There is something extremely affecting in the review of a long, weary, and unprofitable life contained in the following verses from the Latin, as rendered in the 'Retrospective Review.'

'For time is ever hurrying on;
To the hour of death our moments run;
What, in our long career, what useful have we done?
My youth beneath a master's rod
Trembled. In riper years, I trod
The path of vice; the toga drove my thoughts from God.
Days of lascivious pleasure came,
And luxury—then (oh sin, oh shame!)
I sunk in the deep slough of infamy and blame.
* * * * *

'Tis vanished all, in hurried flight,
Ere yet I felt time's trophies, white
Were sprinkled on my brow—or thought, that since the light
Beamed on me, what long years had flown;
Time's snows are on my forehead thrown—
And many a winter now, and many a spring, are gone.
But what doth this, all this, avail?
For soon, too soon, oblivion pale
Will blot alike the good and evil of my tale.
'Twill then be said, who'er thou be,
That world is lost which flattered thee,
And all thou hast pursued is fruitless vanity.
Oh while thy sinful soul can cast
Sin's robes away—redeem the past!
If not in deeds, in words to praise thy Maker haste.
In sacred hymns employ the day,
In praises pass the night away;
And let the martyrs' praise attune the willing lay.
Oh what a privilege, could I
The prison of mortality
Thus burst, and breathing forth this language, die!'

† Thus *f*, which is a strong aspirate, is often changed into *h*; *fabulari*, *hablar*; the liquid *l* is used for *pl* or *cl*, as *llano*, *planus*, *llamar*, *clamo*; the Spanish *ch* (pronounced as in *church*) supplies the place of *ct* in Latin—as *dicho*, for *dictus*, &c.

THE VISIGOTHS.

The decline of literature, and the effeminating influence of luxury among the Romans; the false security in which they indulged, imagining that the valour of their ancestors had done enough to secure dominion even to a careless and dissipated posterity, made way in the fifth and sixth centuries for the sterner and more manly tribes of the north. These soon overspread the fairest portions of Europe. They probably met with little resistance from the aboriginal inhabitants of Spain, who had never completely amalgamated with the Roman intruders; and this may make it appear less surprising that the Visigoths obtained so early an establishment in the Peninsula. The circuses and theatres of Toledo, Merida, and other cities, gradually crumbled into decay and ruin, for the Visigoths had few tastes in common with the Romans, and their amusements were the hardier sports of the field. As for literature, it was their perfect scorn; as a curious instance of which the following is recorded:—Amalasunta, the mother of the famous Alaric, was desirous that her son should receive a liberal education. 'No, no,' exclaimed the assembled warriors on hearing the proposal; 'the idleness of study is unworthy of a Goth; high thoughts of glory are not fed by books, but by deeds of valour. He is to be a king whom all should dread; shall he be compelled to dread his instructors? No.'

The opinion of the Spaniards themselves is, that a similarity of national character led to a complete and cordial union between the Visigoths and the previous inhabitants of the Peninsula. But in the history of the successive conquerors of Spain, the aborigines seem wholly forgotten. Perhaps, like the ass between two masters, they felt little interest in the issue of the fray; and being inferior to both parties in arts and arms, they quietly submitted to that which gained the ascendancy.

However this may be, the revolution was certainly too violent and too general not to affect even the lowest classes of the people; and the language of the invaders, however barbarous or dissimilar to that of the subjugated nation, must have exercised a considerable influence. Many of its roots, and probably some inflexions and elements of composition, were introduced into the vulgar tongue. But there are no remains of Spanish literature during the domination of the Visigoths: whatever impression, therefore, was left by them cannot now be distinctly traced; and, on the whole, the review of this era is very uninviting. The popular dialects were so various and fluctuating, that they were not to be trusted with any matter of importance. Not only were

all chronicles, public acts, and private contracts written in Latin, but even the military songs transmitted from this age are in the same language, so barbarous, indeed, as to prove on the one hand the deterioration it had suffered, and on the other the inadequacy of the vulgar tongue to be the vehicle even of popular poetry.

There are other grounds on which it was difficult for Spain, or indeed any part of Europe, to boast the possession of literature during several centuries after the irruption of the Goths. Egypt no longer furnished it with papyrus; paper, if invented, had not found its way into the west; and parchment was so dear, that, by way of economising it, the margins of books were often covered with private contracts, and the sublime productions of Greece and Rome erased to make way for legendary absurdities. Historic events were therefore preserved chiefly by tradition, and verse was employed as a help to the memory.

THE MOORS.

While the Western world was thus involved in darkness, a new light dawned in the East. As soon as the Mohammedan power was firmly established in Asia, the conquering Saracens turned their arms upon the north of Africa, and soon overran Egypt and the regions now known as the States of Barbary. Thence they cast their eyes on the fertile climes of Spain, at that time under the Visigoth king Roderic. If we may believe the traditions preserved in the historical ballads, the profligacy of this monarch became the occasion of a treacherous conspiracy among some of his nobles, to favour the views of the Moors, and after a desperate conflict at Xeres, the latter remained masters of the field. They soon established a flourishing empire in the Peninsula, and Cordova became the rival of Damascus. The caliphs of the East now sheathed the conquering sword, in order to become the protectors of learning; and the Arab achievements in the literary sphere thus opened to them were not less rapid and brilliant than they had been in the battle-field. Towards the end of the eighth century, Moorish Spain entered on a similar career, and became the most distinguished seat of Arabian learning. Cordova, Granada, Seville, rivalled each other in the magnificence of their schools and the extent of their libraries. While the rest of Europe was almost without literature of any kind, seventy libraries were opened for the use of the inhabitants in the various cities of Spain. The number of Arabic authors which this country produced was so great, that it was no unusual thing to write a *treatise* on the bibliography of a particular town or a single *branch of knowledge*. Their extensive acquisitions in science

gave them immense influence in the kingdom of mind; and they became the chief instructors of the learned of Europe in natural philosophy, history, geography, and arithmetic. They cultivated the natural sciences with even greater ardour, and according to a more enlightened method; and introduced into Europe several of the arts most necessary to the progress of knowledge. Among these we need only mention the manufacture of paper from flax, and the method of notation by what are called Arabic numerals, though probably of Indian origin. But grammar, rhetoric, and, above all, poetry, were the favourite studies of the Arabs; and it is said that this nation has produced more poets than all others put together. Their verses, with scarcely an exception, are lyric or didactic. They have been inexhaustible in amatory poems; in elegies upon their heroes, in moral verses, amongst which fables may be reckoned; in eulogistic, satirical, descriptive, and, above all, didactic poems, which embrace even the rules of grammar, rhetoric, and arithmetic. Some idea of the vast number of these productions may be gained from the fact, that the mere catalogue of those preserved in the Escorial extends to twenty-four folio volumes. Yet it does not include a single epic, comedy, or tragedy.

The celebrity of the metrical compositions of the Arabs rests chiefly on the excessive use of figurative language. They not only employed the most brilliant and gigantic images, but they heaped image upon image, and ornament upon ornament, as though nothing that was beautiful could possibly be superfluous. If one of the great prerogatives of the poetic art is to spiritualise material objects, and to clothe material forms with abstract ideas, the Arabs may well dispute the palm with Greece itself. Personification was so familiar to them, that from the planets which revolve in their orbits, to the feeblest atom in creation, from the most gigantic monsters which inhabit the land or the sea, to the smallest lizard of the desert, the whole universe is, in their poetry, made to assume the faculties and exercise the functions of human beings. As an example, we take the address of Winter in defiance of Timūr the Tartar, perhaps the boldest instance of personification to be found in any language:—

Winter defying Timūr.*

‘Winter with all his tempests hemmed them in,
And poured down hailstones with terrific din;
And winds from every quarter he impelled,
Whose chilling blasts all power of motion quelled.

* Translated by Mr. M. A. Bruce-White, in his ‘*Histoire des Langues Romanes et de leur Littérature, depuis leur origine jusqu’au XIV. siècle.*’ Paris: 1841.

Even where the hero stood his fury burst,
 And thus reviled him: "Tyrant most accurst,
 Arrest thy steps; how long wilt thou destroy
 Millions of innocents with ruthless joy?
 How long consume their entrails and their blood?
 Know me and mine: the elder genii we,
 To whom all regions, all on earth that be,
 Are subject; know, too, and on this rely,
 That planets the worst omened in the sky
 Are in conjunction 'gainst thine enterprise.
 If thou destroyest souls, if from thine eyes
 The chill of death proceeds, at my commands
 Blast of intenser cold shall freeze thy bands;
 Or if thy slaves the faithful host torment,
 Assail, affright, to me by Heaven is lent
 Yet greater power to torture and to quail;
 And, by the Eternal God, I will not fail!
 Take, then, thy meed; and, dotard, be assured:
 By ALLAN's name I swear! no heat procured
 From burning piles, when I exhale my breath,
 Shall save thee from the icy fangs of death."

In the estimation of the Arabs, the poetry of the Greeks was timid, cold, constrained, and unattractive. While they studied the works of Aristotle with almost superstitious veneration, they did not deem Homer, Sophocles, or Pindar worthy of the least attention; and until a comparatively advanced period, not a single poem is to be found among the numerous relics of Greek literature which were transferred to the Arabic language.

The Moors possessed no regular drama; but they had abundance of fictitious narrative, the recitation of which supplied its place. Every one is acquainted with the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments,' of which the conception is so brilliant, and the imagination so rich and varied; which have been the delight of our childhood, and which we can scarcely read, even at an advanced age, without renewed interest. But if we are to believe the translators, we do not possess the six-and-thirtieth part of the original collection. Nor was the prodigious mass of Arabic fiction confined to books. Treasured in the memory, it composed the stock in trade of a numerous class who gained a livelihood by reciting it to the crowds who thronged around them; and even to this day these recitations are the substitutes for the drama in most countries where an Arab population predominates. A story-teller will gather a silent crowd; he will exhibit to his audience those brilliant and fantastic visions which are the patrimony of Eastern imaginations; and the hearers, absorbed in the pleasing dream, gladly forget the sorrows of the

present moment. He will even occasionally provoke laughter; and the brow of the Moslem, which seldom unbends amid the sober realities of life, may now be seen relaxing its severity.

The Arab fancy in these tales is easily distinguishable from that of the chivalrous romances of Europe which were contemporary with them. The latter display the genius of a warlike nation, but the former that of a people who have sheathed the sword, and devoted their attention to commerce and the arts. Their heroes travel into distant realms, and encounter adventures in the acquisition of riches and artificial luxuries; but they are seldom represented as soldiers. In the opinion of the Orientals, military valour was not calculated to awaken a pleasing enthusiasm, but to excite emotions of unmingled pain. Some fine specimens of martial poetry are nevertheless to be found in their voluminous works. We quote one from the English translation of Mr Bruce-White:—

Prince Saïd.

‘Squadrons of knights to hunt the foe he led,
And spears like forests towered above his head.
One would have sworn their bows as yet unstrung,—
Their arrows had discharged and pierced the throng.
One would have sworn the yet unbrandished swords
Had done the work of death without their lords.
One would have sworn the coursers uncontrolled
Had borne their masters where the battle rolled.
His scabbard, richly gemmed, emblazoned seems
With heaven’s own stars, and Luna’s silver beams;
The naked blade, less gorgeous to the sight,
Might still remind thee of the queen of night.
As the bright mirror of a lake it shows,
Save when it strikes, then sparks of fire it throws;
Its polished edges are two tongues which tell
The tale of death in accents terrible.
But when in air the prince his falchion rears,
No longer like the lake its blade appears,
But purple deaths crawl o’er it, suddenly
They change to gouts of blood, which thou might’st see
Slowly distil like multitudes of ants.’

Protected by the tolerant spirit of the Moorish caliphs, the Jews were advanced to a highly-creditable position in the learned circles of Spain. From the period of the destruction of Jerusalem (A. D. 70), there had always been a considerable number of this race in the Peninsula, and, under the Gothic dynasty at least, they had suffered many indignities. They had been pillaged, imprisoned,

exiled, and even condemned to death, according to the caprice of the reigning monarch; and if at any time they had enjoyed a respite from persecution, they owed it rather to the personal humanity of the sovereign than to the tolerance of the law. With great reason, therefore, this oppressed people gladly welcomed the Moorish conquerors of Spain. Under the caliphs they rose from their degraded condition, and reached a higher literary eminence than they had ever before or have ever since attained. A succession of eminent Hebrew scholars, some of whom filled high offices in the state, may be traced from the tenth till the fifteenth century; and time would fail us to enumerate the poets, orators, philosophers, astronomers, mathematicians, historians, grammarians, and physicians of this race who graced the literary pages of Spanish history.

The influence which the Moors of Spain exercised on the language and literature which we have now more especially in view, has been the subject of much difference of opinion. It now appears certain that they were not, as was once supposed, the first to introduce romantic fiction into Europe, for there has lately appeared a collection of Celtic romances, some of which date certainly in the sixth century. Nor were poetic rhyme and measure unknown till their time, for all the remains we have of the ancient Cymbric bards are in this form; and a Basque tradition mentions it as having been in use in Spain from the earliest ages. It has also been stated by some writers that the Provençal poets, whose lays were the delight of Europe during the eleventh and two following centuries, were indebted to the Spanish Moors for their first instructions in 'the joyous art' (*Gai-Saber*, or *Gaya Ciencia*), as their minstrelsy was called. But this also must be given up as a position quite untenable. So far as their history can be traced, there is reason to believe that the troubadours had little intercourse with the Arabs till after they had reached the zenith of their glory. But more satisfactory evidence of their independence is derived from the compositions themselves. The poetry of the Arabs is, as we have remarked, imaginative in the highest degree—that of the Provençals tame in the extreme. The versification of the former is simple and uniform; but the Provençals loved variety of measure, and laboured after the greatest complication of rhymes. The footprint of the Arab has indeed been left deep on Spanish literature, but we cannot detect its traces till a date posterior to the rise of Provençal poetry.

After the Moorish conquest of Spain, A. D. 711, a small but valiant band of Christians, who preferred exile to submission, retired to the mountains of Asturias under the captaincy of *Pelayo*; but by far the greater number remained under the

yoke of the conquerors, and received the appellation of Muzarabs, or mixed Arabians. It appears that these did not abandon their mother-tongue as the medium of ordinary intercourse, but they very generally cultivated Arabic in preference to Latin, as the language of learning, and even of religion. To so great an extent was this the case, that it was soon deemed necessary to translate into Arabic an exposition of the Scriptures, and the canons of the Spanish Christian church, on account of the numbers who understood that language better than Latin. Alvaro, bishop of Cordova, who lived in the ninth century, complains that 'his countrymen have forsaken the study of the sacred characters of Rome for those of the Chaldeans;' and that out of a thousand Christians, scarcely one was to be found capable of repeating the Latin forms of prayer, while many of them could express themselves with ease and elegance in Arabic. Learned men were now resorting from every part of Europe to the colleges founded by Abdalrahman and his successors; and one of those who drank most deeply at the Arabic fount of knowledge was afterwards elected to the papal chair under the name of Sylvester II. (A. D. 999.)

One of the events which powerfully contributed to spread Oriental learning among the Spanish people, was the conquest of Toledo by the latter, in the year 1085, under Alphonso VI. This city, which possessed a splendid Moorish college, now became the capital of the Christian kingdom of Castile; and for several centuries afterwards it always contained a mixed population of Islams and Christians.

We might well expect to find that the Spanish tongue received considerable accessions from the Arabic during this period; but this does not appear to any very great extent in the common language of the people. Arabic roots seem to occupy a similar place in Spanish to that of Greek ones in English; the number is in about the same proportion, and similarly confined, for the most part, to scientific words, which would go to prove that whatever social intercourse took place between the two nations, was not of a kind powerfully to transfuse their every-day vocabulary. It seems that it was chiefly in science and the arts that the Christians were disposed to improve by the superior acquirements of the Moors. Their literature being more deeply imbued with the moral and religious peculiarities of Islamism, was long regarded as a thing accursed; and it was not till the twelfth century that it began to exercise any considerable influence over the Spanish mind. It is at this period that we find the first Latin translations of tales similar to the 'Arabian Nights' *Entertainments*, and also of Arabic fables, apologues, and proverbs.

The earliest of these were made by Peter Alphonso, a converted Jew, better known by his Hebrew name Moses Sephardi. His versions spread rapidly through every part of Europe; and during the two following centuries are found several pieces in the works of Spanish and Italian writers which are but translations or imitations of these. We subjoin the one which stands first* in Sephardi's collection, and which may therefore be looked upon as the earliest transplant of Arabian literature:—

The Touchstone of Friendship.

'An Arab about to die, called his son, and said unto him, "Son, how many friends hast thou made during thy life?"

'The son answered, "I think I have one hundred."

'The father replied, "The philosopher hath said, 'Boast not of a friend until thou hast proved him.' I was born before thee, yet scarcely have I acquired half a friend; how, then, hast thou got the hundred? Go, my son, prove them all, and try if any one will be a perfect friend to thee."

'The son said, "How dost thou counsel me?"

'The father answered, "Put into a sack a slaughtered calf, mangled so that the outside of the sack may be smeared with blood; and when thou shalt have gone to thy friend, say to him, 'Friend, unwittingly I have slain a man, I beseech thee to give him private sepulture;† for no one will suspect thee, and thus thou shalt save my life from the avenger.'"

'The son did as his father commanded. The first to whom he came said, "Take the dead with thee upon thy neck; as thou hast done the evil, thou mayest expose thyself to the vengeance: into my abode thou shalt not enter." And in like manner, when he had asked each of them, from all he received the same reply. Returning to his father, he related what had passed. The father said, "To thee is applicable what the philosopher has said, 'Friends are many when we count them, but few when we need them;' go to my half friend, and hear what he will say to thee."

'He went; and as he had said to the others, he said to him also. He replied, "In my house there can be no secret which would not be known to the neighbours;" therefore he sent forth all his family, and dug a grave. But when the young man saw everything ready, he disclosed the dead calf, and gave thanks to his friend. He then returned to his father, and related all that had passed. Then the father replied, "Of such a one the philosopher says, 'He is a true friend who assists thee when the world fails.'"

In the thirteenth century we find the first instance of a Spanish

* The thirty-seventh in 'CONDE LUCANOR.'

† The Moorish houses were built in the form of a square, having a court or garden in the centre. It was in this space that the young man was to beg for a private grave.

writer adopting the prosopopeia which we have mentioned as so remarkable a feature in Arabic poetry :

' Then came Sport and Jollity,
With their coz, Dame Bravery,
To trip it at the festival.
That day had Cowardice, I ween,
At his own interment been ;
But Envy stayed the funeral,
And spake him thus.' . . .

From this period the Castilian poetry becomes more and more assimilated both in form and spirit to the Arabic. We subjoin another specimen of the latter,* before proceeding to trace the rise and progress of that which must be considered strictly Spanish:—

Shaufari's Farewell.

' Children of her who bore me, fare-you-well !
With other comrades I intend to dwell.
All things are now prepared ; the queen of night
Diffuses o'er the world her silver light ;
Girt are the camels, and the saddles placed ;
Nothing impedes my journey o'er the waste.
There is on earth a solitude for me
Where one of generous soul may tarry, free
From insult ; there companions I shall find
Will make amends for those I leave behind ;
The prowling wolf, the leopard with smooth hide,
And hyen with thick mane ; with these allied,
No fear *they* will betray my confidence.
Say I have erred ; no matter what offence,
They'll not desert me at my utmost need. . . .
Their loss I should not feel were I assured
Of three brave substitutes : a heart inured
To peril, a resplendent scymitar,
And long tough bow that twangs with notes of war,
And groans when from its notch the arrow flies,
Like some fond mother, who with piercing cries
Bewails her darling child when he untimely dies.
I am not of the race who cannot bear
Long hours of thirst, who, when their fleecy care
They lead to pasture, separate the dams,
That they may quaff the milk and starve the lambs.
No cot am I, who never quits his wife,
Still meddling with the household cares of life ;
Nor one of those who at their shadow start,
Timid as ostriches, whose quivering heart

* Translated by Mr Bruce White.

Rises and sinks like sparrow, when it sees
 The falcon stooping from the noontide breeze. . . .
 'Tis thirst and hunger my stout heart contends,
 And when the whirling sand from earth ascends,
 I swallow it as if no harm ensued,
 Lest famine should exclaim, "His pride's subdued!"
 My bowels yearning for food, are like a coil
 Of twisted yarn formed by the spinner's toil.
 At morning's dawn I hury from my tent,
 Swallowing in haste some scanty nourishment.
 Like greedy wolf who, pressed by hunger, flies
 From waste to waste, and when he nothing spies
 He for his food in valley, plain, or strand,
 He harkens raged, and to his howls respond
 His fellow-wolves, so nimble and so spare,
 They run like arrows fleeting through the air.
 They open their ravenous jaws in pure despite,
 Their maws when partly cleft—terrific sight!
 Their answering howls re-echo all around,
 Like shrieks of frantic mothers that resound
 Through hill and dale.
 It war's relentless destinies complain
 That Shaufar is not numbered with the slain,
 Full many a day they have enjoyed his pain.
 All manner of injustice he has borne:
 His flesh was like a camel's, piecemeal torn
 From off his bones; whene'er misfortune lowered,
 On him the vials of her wrath were showered.
 Tormenting cares have still his steps pursued,
 Recurring still with the exactitude
 Of quartan ague; I repelled the crew,
 But they returned and tortured me anew.
 During the dogstar's rage, when vapours dense,
 By the fierce sun exhaled, torment the sense
 With semblance of a lake; when serpents lie
 Gasping and scorched beneath the burning sky,
 I fearless bared my visage to his fire,
 Having no cover but my rent attire
 And raven locks dishevelled by the wind,
 Hanging in filthy tresses, where all kind
 Of vermin teemed, for a long year unkempt!

PROGRESS OF THE SPANISH DIALECTS.

Having thus briefly glanced at the various influences which tended to the formation of the Spanish language and literature, we now turn our attention to the era when the former emerged from the obscurity of a dialect, and appeared before the world as a literary vehicle.

We have already alluded to a small band of the Spanish patri-cians who preferred a precarious livelihood in the mountains to a dishonourable servitude in the Moorish dominions. To these the Asturias became what Wales was to the ancient Britons—a shelter, where they might enjoy their political independence, their religion, their language, their laws, and their national usages, though in the midst of much privation. They were rude and illiterate men, though high-spirited and courageous; a nation composed of exiles, who preferred liberty to riches; among whom were nobles and heroes in the deepest poverty, and who were therefore not likely to recognise to any great degree the adventitious distinctions of fortune. The forms of the language and the usages of society established at this period became an integral part of the national manners; and the respect for a nobly-born citizen, whatever his outward condition, has left an impress which may be traced to this day. The court, the general nobility, and the equal balance of rank, maintained in the language, as well as in the manners of the Spaniards, a tone of courtesy and high-breeding; and subsequently, from the same cause, their literature also was stamped with an elegance and aristocracy which the Italians lost at an early period, having owed their liberties to democracy.

But the time came for these patriots to be conquerors in their turn. On the destruction of the caliph of Cordova in the year 1031, the Moslem territories being dismembered, and becoming a number of petty independent kingdoms, often at variance with each other, afforded to the Christian states a favourable opportunity of reconquering in detail what, as a whole, would probably have remained invincible. Their own internal dissensions considerably retarded their progress, but on several occasions they buried their mutual animosities for a time, and turned their arms successfully against the common foe. One after another the Moorish states fell before them, and the Christians regained the territories of their forefathers. The Moslems were driven further and further to the south, and by the middle of the thirteenth century, they had no dominion in Spain except the kingdom of Granada, which for two centuries longer continued a splendid home for Moorish luxury and magnificence.

Siscar informs us that in the victorious progress of the Christians 'they introduced their own language, which they called *Romano-española*—that is, Roman in Spanish form, without cases in the nouns, with greater distinction in the tenses, and with many other peculiarities which the Spanish had borrowed from the languages of those with whom they had most intercourse.' They regarded with abhorrence all that seemed like a compromise

or comminglement with the infidels, and had several warm disputes with the Muzarabians, who had to a considerable extent adopted the manners, feelings, and perhaps also the language of the Moslems.

The territories of the Christian Spaniards were divided into three longitudinal sections, having each a separate, though not very dissimilar language. The Galician was spoken in the west, from Galicia to the kingdom of Algarva; the Catalan in the east, throughout the states of Arragon, Catalonia, Valencia, and Murcia; while the Castilian occupied the centre. The first of these will not engage our attention till we treat of the Portuguese language and literature; but the Catalan demands some notice before turning to the Castilian, which became the reigning language of the whole Spanish monarchy.

THE CATALAN DIALECT AND POETRY.

The Catalan or Limosin was that which was first cultivated in the Peninsula. The Memoirs of the Academy of Barcelona mention as its earliest monument an epitaph on the tomb of Bernard, Marquis of Barcelona, assassinated by Charles the Bald in the year 844. It is the earliest specimen known of modern Spanish, but slightly mixed with the Latin of the middle age:—

‘Assi jai lo compte Bernad,
Fisel credeire al sang sacrat
Que sempre prud’ hom es estat
Pregu’ en la divina bontat
Qu’ aquela fi que lo tuat
Poseua sou aina aber salvat.’

The next is a private contract, dated A.D. 985, considerably mixed with French; but a third, entirely Catalan, is dated 1059.

The Catalan bore a strong resemblance to the Provençal, which came to maturity before any of the other Romance dialects, and obtained the highest celebrity in Europe as the language of the *troubadours*. These, as their name imports, were men (*qui trouvaient*), who composed new poems; and they often themselves sang them at court or hall on festive occasions. Their poetry took its rise in Provence in the eleventh century, and spread throughout the south of France, and over a portion of Spain and Italy, delighting every court, and animating every festival. They were honoured and recompensed by emperors, kings, princes, and counts; and the Emperor Frederic, a poet himself, praising the different nations who had followed him in his conquests, thus expresses himself:—

A Frenchman I'll have for my chosen knight,
And a Catalonian dame;

A Genoese for his honour bright,
And a court of Castilian fame.
The Provençal songs my ear to please,
And the dances of Trevisan;
I'll have the grace of the Arragonese,
And the pearl of Julian.
The Englishman's hands and face for me,
And a page I'll have from Tuscany.

From the similarity of language, a close intimacy arose between the inhabitants of Catalonia and the Provençal bards, who were always welcome at the courts of the Princes of Arragon and the Counts of Barcelona. The accession of the latter to the sovereignty of Provence early in the twelfth century tended still further to strengthen the literary union between the south of France and the east of Spain, and was the means of communicating to the Catalonians the chivalrous poetry of the troubadours. But it had within itself no elements of advancement, and several circumstances concurred to produce a decay as rapid as had been its growth.

It was the business of the *jongleurs*, or minstrels, to recite the tales or verses they had learned, accompanying them with instrumental music, and often with juggling tricks and buffoonery. By reciting verses they soon learned to compose them also, the consequence of which was, that the troubadours and jongleurs came to be confounded, and the poetic art fell to a certain extent into contempt. After the thirteenth century, the troubadours were heard no more in France; and all the efforts of the Counts of Provence to reawaken their genius and song proved unsuccessful. The cruelties of civil war hastened their downfall, by spreading desolation over the country in which Provençal poetry had chiefly flourished. When the nobles were ruined, and their castles despoiled and abandoned, the poets, whose sole means of subsistence had been their individual generosity, were obliged to seek an asylum elsewhere, and the joyous art was thus banished from the land of its birth.

Meanwhile the kingdom of Arragon was making rapid progress in power, wealth, and military glory. Its sovereigns had, by marriage, succession, and conquest, united many rich provinces under their sway, and were, with scarcely an exception, liberal patrons of the joyous art. Provençal poetry thus found a new home in the east of Spain; and numerous celebrated troubadours arose in Arragon and Catalonia. Their language was rich in musical sounds; it abounded with rhymes; and was equally free from the deep guttural of the Castilian, and the often-recurring nasal of the Portuguese.

The following verses remain of a poem on the first Crusade by an anonymous author of the twelfth century:—

‘Beneath my grief I fainted not,
And hope within me seemed to live,
Until the moment when I thought
That they who injure ne’er forgive.
Be pardon ready;—oft one sees
A wound inflicted ne’er intended,
And oftener by carelessness
Than by design are men offended.
I hoped in vain—when hope had brought
Her dreams so fond, so fugitive—
I hoped—but sank beneath the thought,
That they who injure ne’er forgive.’

Another early specimen of Catalan poetry consists of some coplas by Alphonso II. of Arragon, who died in the year 1196. But the first perfect piece that we are aware of is by St Jordi, who is believed to have lived in the beginning of the thirteenth century. It is thus translated in the ‘Retrospective Review’:—

Song of Contraries.

‘From day to day I learn, but to unlearn,
I live to die—my pleasure is my wo:
In dreary darkness I can light discern,
Though blind, I see, and all but knowledge know.
I nothing grasp, and yet the world embrace,
Though bound to earth, o’er highest heaven I fly,
With what’s behind I run an untired race,
And break from that which holds me mightily.

Evil I find when hurrying after bliss,
Loveless I love, and doubt of all I see;
All seems a dream that most substantial is,
I hate myself—others are dear to me;
Voiceless, I speak—I hear, of hearing void:
My ay is no; truth becomes falsehood strange;
I eat, not hungry—shift, though unannoyed;
Touch without hands—and sense to folly change.

I seek to soar, and then the deeper fall,
When most I seem to sink, then mount I still;
Laughing, I weep—and waking, dreams I call;
And when most cold, hotter than fire I feel;
Perplexed, I do what I would leave undone;
Losing, I gain—time fleetest, slowliest flows;
Though free from pain, ’neath pain’s attacks I groan,
To craftiest fox, the gentlest lambkin grows.’

Martorell, Febrer, the two Jordis, the Marquis of Villena,

Viscount Garcias, and, above all, Ausias March, are names of renown in connection with Catalan poetry. We subjoin two more compositions of this class, chiefly on account of their curious versification :—

Cudolada Verses.

Works prepared	Ocham, Scotus,
On subjects hard,	What they brought us,
Beyond the reach	Opinions prime,
Of thought or speech,	And subtle rhyme,
The subtilties,	To please nor few,
The mysteries,	And profit too,
Of Trinity ;	Is its reward.
If it could be	And I regard
Sinless conceived	Preaching like this,
And so believed.	As great a bliss
Predestination	To hear and see
Is faith's temptation.	As e'er could be.
Then hear Pertuse,	The bright amount
And Sully's muse ;	Of wealth to count
	Another claims, &c. &c.

'What is become of those lovely dames,
Their jewels, perfumes, and bright attire,
And tall plumes flying!

What is become of those ardent flames,
Lighted from passion's wildest fire,
For lovers sighing?

What is become of the soft romance?
What is become of the joyous song,
And the music of the lover?

Where is now that graceful dance
Tripping the rosy path along?
Ah! all is over!

'Twas but a vision's hasty glance;
Fading flowers on a garland hung
Ne'er to recover!'

The increasing prosperity of the kings of Arragon proved fatal, however, to the language as well as the liberties of their subjects. Ferdinand the Catholic married Isabella of Castile, and that princess, on ascending her throne in 1474, virtually shared it with her husband. The monarchy of Castile was more powerful

than that of Arragon, its capital was more brilliant, and its revenues were more considerable. The courtiers were thus attracted to Madrid, and all the nobility conceived it necessary to learn the Castilian language. The poets received a similar impulse when, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, a kind of verse quite new to Spain was introduced from Italy. In their zeal to rival the Castilians in reforming their ancient poetry, the Arragonese began to abandon their mother-tongue, and adopt the language of Boscan, which soon came to be distinguished as the Spanish *par excellence*.

The Catalan is still spoken in the Balearic Islands, and among the lower classes in some of the eastern parts of Spain; but since the sixteenth century, the Castilian alone has been the vehicle of literature.

CASTILIAN DIALECT AND POETRY.

The oldest document in the Castilian language with an ascertained date is a confirmation by Alphonso VII., in the year 1155, of a charter of regulations and privileges granted to the city of Avilés in Asturias. It is still preserved in the archives of the city, on the original parchment—consisting of two skins sewed together, and bearing the known seal of Alphonso VII., with several original signatures. It is believed to be among the very oldest documents ever written in Spanish; and there seems little reason to doubt its genuineness. After a caption or enrolment in bad Latin, it opens with these words:—

‘Estos sunt los foros que deu el rey D. Alfonso ad Abilies quando la poblou par foro Sancti Facundi et otorgo lo emperador. Em primo, per solar pinder, I solido a lo reu et II denarios a lo saion, é cada ano un sólido en censo per lo solar: é qui lo vender, de I solido á lo rai, é quil comparar dará II denarios á lo saion,’ &c.

This dialect continued to follow step by step the fortune of the Castilian arms, until it finally became the established language even of the most southern provinces, where its progress had been longest withstood by the Arabic. It was no doubt improved by the Catalan; but the elevated expression of its long, full-toned words eventually stamped upon it a character totally different. The abbreviation of Latin terminations, which assimilated the Catalan to the French, was not agreeable to the genius of the Castilian, which, in consequence of its clear, sonorous vowels, and the beautiful articulation of its syllables, acquired a greater *resemblance* to the Italian than any other idiom of the Peninsula. *Amidst this euphony*, however, the ear is struck with the sound

of the German and Arabic guttural, which is unknown to all the other languages in which Latin roots predominate.

The ancient Castilian poetry was closely allied to the Portuguese and Galician, but distinctly separated from the Limosin or Catalan. The troubadours, it is true, chanted their lays at the court of Castile; but the national taste preferred different accents and other metrical combinations: in short, it was accustomed to another species of poetry of its own creation. The old Castilian poetry was more popular and strictly national than either the Provençal or the Italian. It was not made for recitation in courtly circles, in the presence of lords and ladies; but it arose amidst the clang of arms, it was taught by mothers to their children, and was fostered by constantly-repeated narrations of warlike feats and love adventures. The poems called *romances* took their name from the national language; and it is probable that this designation was at first given to all kinds of amatory and heroic ballads. But though the Castilians did not mark with critical precision the limits of different species of poetry, they very carefully distinguished several kinds of measure and forms of rhyme widely different from the Provençal and Limosin.

The *redondilla* was the most peculiarly national metre in use among them. This verse consists of four trochaic feet, and as no great attention was paid either to the rhyme or the distinction between long and short syllables, almost any one could compose ballads of this sort. Every one, therefore, who either witnessed or shared an adventure, endeavoured to give it traditional circulation in verse. Line followed line without constraint; the expression of gallantry or heroism flowing with careless freedom, as feeling gave it birth. But when romantic sentiments were to be clothed in a popular lyrical dress, it was deemed better to introduce divisions and periods, in order to exhibit the playful turns of thought under more pleasing forms. This gave rise to regular strophes or coplas.

In the earliest specimens of Castilian poetry there is a manifest preference for a single sonorous and unvarying rhyme appearing prominently throughout all the verses of a long romance. In some compositions, pairs of rhymeless verses glide amidst a variety of rhymed ones. But at a later period, it was considered an improvement to substitute imperfect for perfect rhymes; that is, sounds echoing the same vowel, but not the same final consonant in the terminating syllables. This was called *assonance*, in opposition to *consonance*. It is quite peculiar to the Peninsula, and seems to have been even more pleasing to the Spaniards than the perfect jingle, though not satisfactory to the English ear. The following is a Moorish romance in redondillas, with the assonance *i* and *e* in most of the final syllables:—

' He the thunderbolt of battle,
 He the first Alferex titled,
 Who as courteous is as valiant,
 And the noblest as the fiercest ;
 He who by our youths is envied,
 Honoured by our ancient maidens,
 By our youths, by crowds distinguished,
 By a thousand pointed fingers ;
 He beloved by fairest damsels
 For discretion and politeness ;
 Cherished son of time and fortune,
 Bearing all their gifts divinest ;
 He, who garlanded Mezquitas
 With the trophies of the vanquished ;
 He, who peopled our Mazmorras *
 With such crowds of Christian prisoners,
 Who already twice has armed him
 Less with steel than courage girded,
 And his country from its perils
 Has already twice delivered ;
 He, the proud Abenzulema
 To his distant exile driven,
 There invited by his monarch,
 Or perchance by love invited ;
 For the Moor adored a Mooress,
 One for whom the king had sighed,
 Far beyond idea lovely,
 And discreet beyond idea.
 Some few flowers the lady gave him,
 Flowers to him the sweetest, brightest,
 But for the too-jealous monarch
 They were fruits of poisonous virtue,
 And that poison worked within him.
 From his court the Moor is driven,
 His fidelity is questioned—
 But the king's dishonour hidden.
 Forth the noble Moor is coming
 On a steed, the proudest, whitest ;
 He has drunk of Guadalquivir,
 And upon its banks has idled,
 Covered o'er with splendid trappings,
 Moorish work the fairest, richest,
 All adorned with gorgeous labour ;
 Black and gold the costly bridle,
 And the steed stepped forth so proudly,
 Pride and grace so well commingled,
 That at every trace he measured
 From the ground up to the girdle.

* Mazmorra—the subterranean dungeon of the Moors.

O'er his raven Moorish garment
His albornoz white is circled,
For they are becoming emblems,
Innocence and grief united ;
Thousand lance-heads skirt the border,
Round his upper garment, written
In the language of Arabia,
" For my errors " was inscribed.
On his head a dark-blue turban
Hanging o'er the side sinister,
Three black plumes towered proudly o'er him
In a precious jewel fixed.
Plumes, he mounted to betoken
That his fond desires were winged ;
In the wind they still are waving,
Though from glory disunited ;
Now he bears but his good sabre
By Toledo's monarch given.
Thus the valiant Moor departed ;
Valiant and unbending still he
Journeyed then with Marmolejo's
And Arjona's swain Alcaides.
Many a knight is gathered round him,
All the people near him mingled ;
And the ladies, as he journeyed,
Gave him looks the friendliest, kindest ;
Many a briny tear is falling
From those eyes of beauty lighted ;
Showers of fragrance fall upon him,
From the balconies then sprinkled ;
Then the loveliest Balaxa,
Mourning in her deep retirement
O'er the monarch's desperate folly,
Her fair tresses strangely wildered,
Hearing such a loud confusion,
Sought the balcony, and listened ;
Then in melancholy muteness
Uttered with a tongue of silence :
" Go in peace ! thou'rt not abandoned ;
Blessings still shall walk beside thee ;
He who drives thee now from Jaen,
From my bosom cannot drive thee,
And against the monarch's baseness
In thy truth I will confide me."
Then he hastened on his journey,
Fixed his eyes upon the maiden,
Stole a hundred-thousand glances,
And to Andujar meekly hied he.

The invention of redondillas was nearly contemporaneous with that of the dactylic stanza, called '*versos de arte mayor*,' because it was considered an art of superior order. The attention paid to purity in the rhythm of the dactyls was even less than in that of the redondillas, and eleven or twelve syllables were dealt out with little regard to their respective lengths. With the improvement of poetic taste, however, these half-dancing, half-hobbling verses fell into disuse, while the redondillas maintained their popularity.

Besides the above, the sonnet form was known in Spain long before the imitation of Italian poetry was thought of. It was acquired probably through the Provençal poets, but it never became popular. Nor less adverse to the national taste was the long protracted Alexandrine, introduced by the monks in the thirteenth or perhaps even the twelfth century. It also soon sunk into disesteem.

POEM OF THE CID.

1150 A. D.

The *Cid* has long been received as the most ancient poetical monument of the Castilian language. The precise date of its composition, as well as the name of its author, is unknown; but it is generally attributed to the middle of the twelfth century, which is about fifty years after the death of the hero whose exploits it celebrates. If admitted as a fair specimen of the language of that period, it proves that though the Castilian was then in a very rude and ungrammatical state, it yet had its peculiar terminations, its flexions, its idioms; that it was easily recognisable as a dialect distinct from the Catalan and Galician, and that it was considered capable of serving as a literary vehicle.

The *Cid*, if allowed the name of an epic, is certainly the oldest to be found in any of the Romance languages, being 150 years anterior to the work of Dante. Besides being venerable for its antiquity, it is highly interesting on account of the faithful picture it presents of manners and character in the eleventh century. The blind obedience to kingly authority, the influence of the priests, the disorganized state of society, are strikingly developed; while over all there is thrown a spirit of rude devotion, manifesting itself in constant appeals to the Heavenly Creator, Holy Mary, Jesus, and the saints. Here is great vigour of language, a perpetual current of imposing events, a frequent display of bold and lively, though unpolished, portraits of individuals, and some pas-

sages of touching interest. At the same time, it is universally admitted that this composition has little claim to the distinguishing features of poetry. The events are related in historic order; and scarcely a mark of invention, or anything like a flight of imagination, occurs in the whole. In this respect it differs strikingly from the poetry of the Arabs; while in its versification, which is barbarous in the extreme, it is equally unlike the songs of the troubadours. The author was evidently quite ignorant of prosody, and therefore composed his lines of fourteen, fifteen, or eighteen syllables as suited his purpose, without any anxiety to adapt his expressions to his metre. The rhyme also, wherever it occurs, is totally different from that of the Provençal poets, and presents us with that assonance or semi-rhyme which we have mentioned as peculiar to Spanish poetry. The assonants in the *Cid*, however, are very incomplete, and often unsatisfactory to the ear; and instead of the ever-changing and complex rhymes of the Provençals, the Spanish poet not unfrequently continues the same vowel through fifteen, twenty, or even through thirty lines, till, finding no more suitable words, he seeks a new sound, to share the same fate in its turn.

Besides the poem, or rather the rhyming chronicle of the *Cid*, there is a very ancient account of the same hero in prose, and above a hundred romances founded on different passages of his life. His name stands in the foreground of the early history and poetry of Spain; and the ancient Castilian tragedies, comedies, romances, and songs, have each in turn made him their subject. His memory is indeed so sacredly dear to the Spanish nation, that to say, '*à fe de Rodrigo*'—('by the faith of Rodrigo')—is still considered the strongest vow of loyalty.

He was born, as is supposed, about the year 1026, in the reign of Sancho III., surnamed the Great. His name was Don Rodrigo Laynez, the son of Diego; but he received the abbreviated appellation of Ruy Diaz; besides which, he was called by the Spaniards '*El Campeador*'—the Champion; and by the Moors *Es-Said*—the lord or prince; whence the name of *The Cid* had its origin. The castle of Vivar, two leagues from Burgos, was probably the place of his birth, which was derived on the female side from the Counts of Castile. The military career of Don Rodrigo was commenced under the banners of Ferdinand of Castile, the son of Sancho the Great, and continued in the successive reigns of his sons—Sancho the Strong, and Alphonso VI. It is said that on the accession of the latter, the *Cid* obliged him to take a solemn oath, in presence of the assembled nobles, that he had in no way been accessory to the death of his brother Sancho, to whom Don Rodrigo had been fondly attached. Alphonso could never forgive

this; and notwithstanding the valuable services again and again rendered him by the hero, he more than once banished him from his court, and only countenanced him when unable to stand his ground without the aid of his military prowess. This ingratitude of the king, contrasted with the persevering fidelity of his powerful vassal, afforded a fine moral theme for the Spanish bards; while the valorous deeds of the Cid formed no less suitable a subject for the enthusiasm of patriotic and poetic feeling.

The poem opens at the period when the Cid, having fallen under the king's displeasure, has received orders to quit Castile; his wife and daughters have been detained in a convent, and his goods confiscated. He is now leaving the home of his fathers, where everything bespeaks the desolation and destruction which has been effected by the royal command. The windows are shattered, the doors are broken down, the store-rooms lying open and empty, and the falcons' mews deserted. The hero weeps—for tears are not derogatory to the dignity of the most valiant knight. Sixty friends, faithful to him in shame as in glory, accompany him into exile; and as they pass through the city of Burgos, the inhabitants crowd to their windows and doors lamenting his departure. 'Oh God!' they exclaim, 'why didst not thou give a good lord to so good a vassal?' But Alphonso has forbidden his subjects, under severe penalties, to shelter the fugitive, and no one dares to offer him the rites of hospitality. He proceeds to the convent, in the chapel of which there is a tender parting with his wife Ximena:—

'And the night began to wane, and the day was dawning then :
Up heroes of the morn ! for ye are valiant men ;
For the matin bell now calls, and the bells are ringing fast.
To church the valiant Cid and his wife Ximena haste.
At the holy altar foot she threw her on the ground,
And prayed in language rude—such language as she found :
" Lord,* thou art King of Kings, the universal lord !
Believed by my heart and by my tongue adored !

* " Tu eres rey de los reyes é de todo el mundo padre :
A tí adoro é creo de toda voluntad,
E' ruego á San Peydro que me ayude á rogar
Por mio Cid el Campeador que Dios le cuire de mal,
Quando hoy nos partimos, en vida nos faz yuntar.
La oracion fecha la misa acabada la han :
Salieron de la iglesia ya quieren cavalgar
El Cid á doña Ximena íbala abrazar
Doña Ximena el Cid la manol' va á besar,
Lorando de los ojos que non sabe que se far.
E' él á las niñas tornólas á catar,
A' Dios vos acomiendo, fijas ;
E' á la mugier, é al padre spiritual." 362—374.

Sanchez, p. 26.—Paris, 1842.

St Peter, help my prayers! while thus, my God, I pray,
 That thou wilt shield my Cid from danger on his way.
 We part!—Oh may we meet, and meet on earth again!”—
 The oration's said—the mass is over—no delay—
 The steeds are all prepared—come hasten to the plain.
 Towards his wife the hero turns, and asks a last embrace;
 She bends to kiss his hand, and down her mournful face
 Her tears fled hurryingly: she knew not what to do.
 He looked upon his girls, and in this sad adieu
 Commended them to God above;
 To God, and to his wife—the woman of his love.
 “And now we part—God knows when we shall meet, if ever!”
 How many tears were shed; oh such a scene was never!
 Even like a nail that's torn from the living flesh they part.
 My Cid with all his host now pricks his steed to start;
 And bows his head, and turns to those he leaves behind.
 Then Alvar Fanez speaks, reproves his wavering mind:
 “Is then your valour, Cid, forlorn?
 Was it for this that you of such high race were born?
 Forward!—now forward, Cid! here tarry thou no more,
 For that shall turn to joy which sorrow was before:
 He who gave us souls to feel shall give us counsel sure.”

The Cid advances towards the Moorish territories, resolved still to fight his country's battles with the Moslems; but finding that, in consequence of the confiscation of his property, he has not funds for the prosecution of the war, he induces a Jew to lend him 500 marks of silver, which the first spoils of the Moors will enable him to repay. As a pledge, he leaves with the Jew two heavy cases, which he says contain all his jewels and treasures, and which are not to be opened within one year. The number of his followers rapidly increases; and on the first day of conflict he takes and sacks the castle of Henarez, of which the riches enable him to repay the Jew, and redeem without loss of character the two chests, which were filled only with sand. Abandoning Henarez after the pillage, he proceeds to another very strong place called Alcocer, and obtains possession of it; but is in turn closely besieged within its walls by three Moslem princes. When the provisions are beginning to fail, and no hope of succour appears, the Cid prevails on his followers to embrace the desperate alternative of a sally, rather than surrender. The effort is successful: two of the kings are wounded, and the whole of their army dispersed, while immense booty accrues to the victors. Immediately after this success, Don Rodrigo sends an embassy to Castile to present the king Alphonso with thirty Moorish horses as his share of the spoil, and to appoint ten thousand masses to be said for the welfare of his own soul. Alphonso is so far conciliated by this

tribute of respect from his injured vassal, that he allows the Cid to levy troops in Castile; and large numbers, attracted by the fame of his achievements, flock to his standard.

The next occurrence of interest is the conflict with Raymond III., Count of Barcelona. This prince—whether from jealousy at the rising glory of the Cid, or from a sense of duty towards the Moors, with whom he was in alliance—declares war with our hero, and compels him to give battle. The count is not only defeated, but taken prisoner, and scorning his dishonoured life, he refuses all sustenance, and resolves to die of starvation. The generous conqueror intreats him to eat and drink; and on the third day promises not only to give him his own liberty, but that of his sons, as soon as he has broken his fearful resolution. The count yields, asks for water to wash his hands, eats, and is liberated—the Cid retaining, as a trophy of the victory, his sword, which was worth a thousand marks of silver.

Don Rodrigo now advances still farther southward, takes Alicant, Jerica, and Almenara, and invites all the chivalry of Castile and Arragon to join him in the siege of Valencia. This city capitulates after six months; and the conqueror sends for his wife and daughters to make their home in the palace of the Moorish kings. Scarcely have they arrived, when the hero is again called to arms. Yūsuf, emperor of Morocco, has landed in Spain with an army of fifty thousand men, to retrieve, if possible, the falling fortunes of the Moslems. The two armies encounter each other; the Moors are routed; and again the conquering Cid obtains extensive spoil, of which, as before, he sends a portion to the king. Alphonso now proposes to restore him to his favour on condition of a matrimonial union between the two daughters of the Cid and the two sons of Gonzalez, Count of Carrion. The first part of the poem closes with a description of the nuptial festivities. A lion which Rodrigo used to keep chained in his palace breaks loose, and makes its way into the festive hall. In the commotion which arises from this formidable visit, the two young men appear sadly unworthy of the relation they are contracting. They betray as much terror as the women, and steal behind the guests for personal safety; but the Cid approaches the animal, takes him by the chain, and leads him back to his den. The contempt of the company turns on the two sons of Carrion, who feel persuaded that this has been a device of the Cid to try their courage, or rather to expose their cowardice.

The chronicle goes on to relate how a reinforcement to the Moorish army arrived soon afterwards; and the pusillanimity of the sons-in-law, weakly yearning for the quiet of their father's *castle*, is contrasted with the ardour of Rodrigo's veteran warriors,

exulting in the hope of new laurels. Even the Bishop of Valencia longs to join the camp, and, seeking the presence of the Cid, he implores permission to bear his banner and his arms in the van, expressing his hope of covering them with blood. His Christian-like prayer is heard; and he slays seven of the enemy with his own hand in the very beginning of the conflict. The achievements of the Cid are still more brilliant: he kills the Moorish king, and gains possession of his sword, valued at a thousand marks of gold. Meanwhile his sons-in-law are trembling in the midst of the soldiers, who can scarcely hide their contempt for such unwarlike spirits. Finding this sphere more and more uncongenial, they beg leave to return to Carrion, taking their wives along with them. Elvira and Sol cannot refuse to accompany their husbands; but the parting between them and their parents is with sore lamentations and dark forebodings on both sides. Rodrigo loads his daughters with gifts, and presents his sons-in-law with the swords won by his valour from the Count of Barcelona and the king of the Moors, at the same time commissioning his trusty cousin Felez Muños to escort the travellers. But the sons of Carrion, having married these ladies only for their wealth, and despising them as of inferior birth, have planned to rid themselves of them by the way, and carry off their riches, which will enable them, as they flatter themselves, to form an alliance with the king's daughters. On their way, they are entertained in a most sumptuous manner by Abn Galvon, a distinguished Moor in alliance with Rodrigo; and the intended commencement of their treacherous proceedings is to assassinate and plunder their host. A servant of the Moor, who understands Spanish, overhears their conversation, and warns his master. The Moor calls them, and dismisses them with a severe reproof, informing them that he spares them only out of respect for the Cid; he bestows his good wishes on the ladies, but hopes never to see their husbands again. The travellers are represented as continuing their journey, and at night spreading their tents in a pleasant orchard on the confines of the oak-forest of Corpés. In the morning the two young men send forward all the attendants with the baggage, and being left alone with their wives, they commence their cruelties by telling them that here they will be avenged of the trick that the Cid played them in loosing the lion. They then strip off their mantles and pelisses, and take the horses' reins to beat them, which, when the ladies see, they implore them to kill them at once with their swords, that they may win the crown of martyrdom, but not to whip them disgracefully like slaves. But in vain their intreaties; they are lashed with the thongs till they fall bleeding and senseless on the ground, where their inhuman husbands leave

them for dead. Meanwhile Felez Muños, uneasy at their delay, returns part of the way, and seeing the two men travelling alone, he hides himself till they are past, and then proceeding to the place where the night was spent, he finds the ladies stretched on the earth, and weltering in blood. He brings them water, induces them to rise, and accompanies them to a safe retreat, where they remain till their father, having been apprised of the outrage, sends an escort for them to return home.

Before avenging himself, the Cid sends an embassy to King Alphonso, demanding that a Cortés of the counts and nobles of the land be invoked to judge his quarrel. Alphonso consents; for he feels that an insult has been offered to himself as well as to his vassal, and the Cortés is to assemble at Toledo at the end of seven weeks.

Perhaps the most interesting and valuable portion of the poem, as a picture of the manners of Spain at this period, is contained in the truly dramatic description of the Cortés. The grandees of Castile arrive one by one at Toledo. Count Don García Ordoñez, an enemy of the Cid, is among the first, and he encourages the two young men with promises of assistance. The Cid arrives, attended by a hundred of the brave knights who were his companions at the conquest of Valencia. They are furnished with weapons, lest there should be personal violence, but conceal them under the richest mantles, in order to preserve a pacific aspect. As soon as the Cid enters, the assembly all rise in token of respect, except the few who are pledged to side with the sons of Carrion. Alphonso opens the proceedings by expressing his sense of the obligations under which he lies to the hero of Spain, and his indignation at the insult which has been offered to him. He concludes by appointing judges from among neutral parties to hear the case. The Cid, instead of entering at once on a detail of his wrongs, requires that, as his daughters have been sent back to him, so should their dowry and the two swords likewise be returned. This cannot be refused. The young men are advised, even by their own partisans, to restore the swords and pay the money, which obliges them to borrow from their friends, or mortgage their lands. As soon as the Cid thus obtains possession of his property, he again addresses the king:*

“Justice and mercy, my lord the king! I beseech you of your grace; I have a grievance left behind which nothing can efface;

* The subjoined translation is from the pen of Mr J. Hookham Frere, and is published by Mr Southey in an appendix to his ‘Chronicle of the Cid,’ with the remark, that he has never seen any translation which so perfectly represents the manner, character, and spirit of its original.

Let all men present in the court attend and judge the case.
 Listen to what those counts have done, and pity my disgrace.
 Dishonoured as I am, I cannot be so base
 But here before I leave them to defy them to their face.
 Say, Infants, how had I deserved, in earnest or in jest,
 Or on whatever plea you can defend it best,
 That you should rend and tear the heartstrings from my breast?
 I gave you at Valencia my daughters in your hand;
 I gave you wealth and honours, and treasure at command.
 Had you been weary of them, to cover your neglect
 You might have left them with me in honour and respect.
 Why did you take them from me?—dogs and traitors as you were!
 In the forest of Corpés, why did you strip them there?
 Why did you mangle them with whips?—why did you leave them
 bare

To the vultures and the wolves, and to the wintry air?
 The count will hear your answer, and judge what you have done.
 I say your name and honour henceforth is lost and gone.”
 The Count Don Garcia was the first to rise:
 “We crave your favour, my lord the king; you are always just and
 wise.

The Cid is come into your court in such an uncouth guise—
 He has left his beard to grow, and tied it in a braid—
 We are half of us astonished, the other half afraid.
 The blood of the Counts of Carrion is of too high a line
 To take a daughter from his house, though it were for a concu-
 bine—

A concubine or a leman from the lineage of the Cid;
 They could have done no other than leave them as they did:
 We neither care for what he says, nor fear what he may threat.”
 With that the noble Cid rose up from off his seat;
 He took his beard in his hand—“If this beard is fair and even,
 I must thank the Lord alone, who made both earth and heaven.
 It has been cherished with respect, and therefore it has thriven:
 It never suffered an affront since the day it first was worn.
 What business have you, Count, to speak of it with scorn?
 It never yet was shaken, nor plucked away, nor torn
 By Christian nor by Moor, nor by man of woman born,
 As yours was once, Sir Count, the day Cabrá was taken;
 When I was master of Cabrá, that beard of yours was shaken:
 There was never a footboy in my camp but twitched away a bit—
 The side that I tore off grows all uneven yet!”
 Feran Gonzalez started upon the floor;
 He cried with a loud voice, “Cid! let us hear no more!
 Your claim for goods and money was satisfied before.
 Let not a feud arise betwixt our friends and you;
 We are the Counts of Carrion, from them our birth we drew.
 Daughters of emperors or kings were match for our degree;
 We hold ourselves *too good* for a baron such as thee.

If we abandoned as you say, and left and gave them o'er,
We vouch that we did right, and prize ourselves the more."
The Cid looked at Bermuez that was sitting at his foot:
"Speak thou, Peter the Dumb; what ails thee to sit mute?
My daughters and thy nieces are the parties in dispute:
Stand forth and make reply, if you would do them right;
If I should rise to speak, you cannot hope to fight."
Peter Bermuez rose—somewhat he had to say;
The words were strangled in his throat—they could not find their way;
Till forth they came at once, without a stop or stay:—
"Cid! I'll tell you what—this always is your way!
You have always served me thus whenever we have come
To meet here in the Cortès, you call me Peter the Dumb.
I cannot help my nature; I never talk nor rail;
But when a thing is to be done, you know I never fail.
Fernando, you have lied! you have lied in every word!
You have been honoured by the Cid, and favoured and preferred.
I know of all your tricks, and can tell them to your face.
Do you remember in Valencia the skirmish and the chase?
You asked leave of the Cid to make the first attack;
You went to meet the Moor, but you soon came running back.
I met the Moor, and killed him, or he would have killed you;
I gave you up his arms, and all that was my due.
Up to this very hour I never said a word.
You praised yourself before the Cid, and I stood by and heard
How you had killed the Moor, and done a valiant act;
And they believed you all; but they never knew the fact.
You are tall enough and handsome, but cowardly and weak!
Thou tongue without a hand! how can you dare to speak?
There's the story of the lion should never be forgot:
Now let us hear, Fernando, what answer have you got?
The Cid was sleeping in his chair, with all his knights around,
The cry went forth along the hall that the lion was unbound!
What did you do, Fernando? Like a coward, as you were,
You slunk behind the Cid, and crouched beneath his chair!
We pressed around the throne, to shield our lord from harm,
Till the good Cid awoke: he rose without alarm;
He went to meet the lion with his mantle on his arm.
The lion was abashed the noble Cid to meet—
He bowed his mane to the earth, his muzzle at his feet.
The Cid by the neck and mane drew him to his den;
He thrust him in at the hatch, and came to the hall again.
He found his knights, his vassals, and all his valiant men;
He asked for his sons-in-law—they were neither of them there.
I defy you for a coward and a traitor as you are!
For the daughters of the Cid you have done them great unright;
In the wrong that they have suffered you stand dishonoured quite.
Although they are but women, and each of you a knight,
I hold them worthier far; and here my sword I plight,

Before the King Alphonso, upon this plea to fight.
If it be God his will, before the battle part,
Thou shalt avow it with thy mouth like a traitor as thou art!"
Up rose Diego Gonzalez, and answered as he stood:
"By our lineage we are counts, and of the purest blood.
This match was too unequal; it never could hold good.
For the daughters of the Cid we acknowledge no regret;
We leave them to lament the chastisement they met:
It will follow them through life for a scandal and a jest.
I stand upon this plea to combat with the best—
That having left them as we did, our honour is increased."
Up rose Martin Antolinez when Diego ceased:
"Peace, lying mouth! thou traitor coward, peace!
The story of the lion should have taught you shame at least:
You rushed out at the door, and ran away so hard,
You fell into the cesspool that was open in the yard.
We dragged you forth in all men's sight dripping from the drain!
For shame!—never wear a mantle nor a knightly robe again!
I fight upon this plea without more ado—
The daughters of the Cid are worthier far than you.
Before the combat part you shall avow it true,
And that you have been a traitor and a coward too."
Thus was ended the parley and challenge betwixt these two.
Assur Gonzalez was entering at the door,
With his ermine mantle trailing along the floor;
With his sauntering pace and his hardy look,
Of manners or of courtesy little heed he took;
He was flushed and hot with breakfast and with drink.
"What, ho! my masters, your spirits seem to sink!
Have we no news stirring from the Cid Ruy Diaz of Bivar?
Has he been to Rioldivirna to besiege the windmills there?
Does he tax the millers for their toll, or is that practice past?
Will he make a match for his daughters, another like the last?"
Munio Gustioz rose and made reply:
"Traitor! wilt thou never cease to slander and to lie?
You breakfast before mass, you drink before you pray:
There is no honour in your heart, nor truth in what you say.
You cheat your comrade and your lord, you flatter to betray:
Your hatred I despise, your friendship I defy:
False to all mankind, and most to God on high.
I shall force you to confess that what I say is true."

Alphonso here imposes silence on the assembly, and declares that he will allow the cause to be decided by personal combat between the parties who have thus challenged. At the same moment two ambassadors enter the assembly, and request that the two daughters of the Cid may be given in marriage to the princes of Navarre and Arragon—a singular enough proposal after their late adventures. But Alphonso seconds the request,

and the Cid consents. The Infants of Carrion demand three weeks to prepare for the combat, and Rodrigo is obliged to return to Valencia. Alphonso therefore takes his three champions under his own protection—he promises to preside in person at the combat on the plains of Carrion, and announces that if any of the parties fail to appear there at the end of twenty-one days, he shall be considered as vanquished, and accounted a traitor. The Cid now unties his beard, which he had hitherto kept bound in token of his affliction: and after thanking the king, and taking leave of the *grandees*, he returns to Valencia.

At the time appointed, Alphonso proceeds to Carrion, accompanied by the three knights who have espoused the quarrel of the Cid. On the other side, the Count Garcia Ordoñez superintends the preparation of the Infants of Carrion. They intreat the king to forbid their antagonists the use of the two good swords *Colada* and *Tizona*, which had so recently been theirs; but Alphonso replies that they never unsheathed these, though they were masters of them for a time, and that it is now the duty of all parties to secure the best weapons in their power. He directs the erection of the barriers, names the heralds and judges, and thus addresses the combatants:—

“ Infants of Carrion, attend to what I say !
 You should have fought this battle upon a former day,
 When we were at Toledo; but you would not agree;
 And now the noble Cid has sent these champions three,
 To fight in the plains of Carrion, escorted here by me.
 Be valiant in your right; attempt no force or wrong;
 If any man attempt it, he shall not triumph long.
 He never shall have rest nor peace within my kingdom more.”
 The Infants of Carrion are now repenting sore;
 The heralds and the king are foremost in the place;
 They clear away the people from about the middle space;
 They measure out the lists—the barriers they fix;
 They point them out in order, and explain to all the six:
 “ If you are forced beyond the line where they are fixed and traced,
 You shall be held as conquered and beaten and disgraced.”
 Six lances’ length on either side an open space is laid;
 They share the field between them, the sunshine and the shade.
 Their office is performed, and from the middle space
 The heralds are withdrawn, and leave them face to face.
 Here stood the warriors of the Cid, that noble champion;
 Opposite on the other side the Lords of Carrion.
 Each thinks now of himself, and of himself alone.
 They seize their shields—those shields their valiant bosoms cover;
 They bend their lances down with their pennons flying over;
 They look upon their steeds and their harness in their pride,
 And their spurs have entered deep their fiery horses’ side;

And the earth beneath them trembles, trembles at their feet;
Each, each must stand alone for his honour to provide;
For three 'gainst three in close encounter now they meet.
Bermuez, the first challenger, first in combat closed;
He met Feran Gonzalez, face to face opposed;
They rush together with such rage that all men count them dead,
They strike each other on the shield without all fear or dread.
Feran Gonzalez with his lance pierced the shield outright,
It passed Bermuez on the left side—in his flesh it did not bite.
The spear was snapped in twain—Bermuez sat upright;
He neither flinched nor swerved, like a true and steadfast knight.
A good stroke he received, but a better he has given;
He struck the shield upon the boss, in sunder it is riven;
Onward into Feran's breast the lance's point is driven,
Full upon his breastplate—nothing would avail:
Two breastplates Fernando wore and a coat of mail;
The two are riven in sunder, the third stood him in stead,
The mail sunk in his breast, the mail and the spear-head;
The blood burst from his mouth, that all men thought him dead;
The blow has broken his girdle and his saddle-girth,
It has taken o'er his horse's back, and borne him to the earth.
The people think him dead, as he lies on the sand.
Bermuez left his lance, and took his sword in hand;
Feran Gonzalez knew the blade which he had worn of old;
Before the blow came down, he yielded, and cried "Hold!"
Antolinez and Diego encountered man for man;
Their spears were shivered with the shock, so eagerly they ran;
Antolinez drew forth the blade which Diego once had worn,
Eagerly he aimed the blow for the vengeance he had sworn—
Right through Diego's helm the blade its edge has borne;
The crest and helm are lopped away, the coif and hair are shorn;
He stood astounded with the stroke, trembling and forlorn;
He waved his sword above his head, he made a piteous cry,
"Oh, save me, save me from that blade, Almighty Lord, on high!"
Antolinez came fiercely on to reach the fatal stroke;
Diego's courser reared upright, and through the barrier broke.
Antolinez has won the day, although his blow was missed;
He has driven Diego from the field, and stands within the list.
I must tell you of Munio Gustioz—two combats now are done—
How he fought with Assur Gonzalez you shall hear anon.
Assur Gonzalez, a fierce and hardy knight,
He rode at Munio Gustioz with all his force and might;
He struck the shield, and pierced it through, but still the point came
wide—
It passed by Munio Gustioz between his arm and side.
Sternly, like a practised knight, Munio met him there;
His lance he levelled steadfastly, and through the shield him bare;
He bore the point into his breast—a little beside the heart;
It took him through the body, but in no mortal part:

The shaft stood out behind his back a good cloth yard and more,
 The pennon and the point were dripping down with gore.
 Munio still clenched his spear—as he passed he forced it round;
 He wrenched him from the saddle, and cast him to the ground;
 His horse sprang forward with the spur, he plucked the spear away;
 He wheeled, and came again, to pierce him where he lay.
 Then cried Gonzalo Asurez, "For God's sake, spare my son!"
 The other two have yielded—the field is fought and won!

Proclamation is now made by the heralds and judges that the champions of the Cid are victorious. The latter are conveyed during the night from the territories of Carrion, lest the vassals of the Infants should avenge their defeat.

The two last verses of the chronicle contain the information that the Cid died on the day of Pentecost, but without mentioning either the year or the manner of his death. Commentators suppose, however, that this event took place in A.D. 1099.

POEM OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

1176—1250.

A production possessing considerable interest in the literary history of Spain is entitled *El Poema de Alejandro Magno*—supposed to have been written in the thirteenth century by one Juan Lorenzo Segura. It is, like the poem of the Cid, deficient in harmony; and also, to a certain extent, destitute of invention; while the absence of the latter quality is not compensated by the interesting simplicity with which the adventures of Don Rodrigo are related. It is supposed to be from this composition that the measure consisting of twelve syllables has received the name of Alexandrine.

The design is to develop the various circumstances of the life and death of Alexander the Great; but the poet, being ignorant of the manners and customs of ancient Greece, substitutes those of Spain in the thirteenth century, and invests the Macedonian hero with all the virtues, and even the equipments, of European chivalry. The main features of the history are but feebly brought out in the midst of puerile fiction; yet these fictions have their value, as depicting the feelings and manners of the age in which the author lived.

He has carefully described all the prodigies that are said to have accompanied the birth of Alexander:—

* Know that it is recorded, and doubt it not, the air was changed,
 and the sun was darkened; the ocean stormed, the earth trembled,

stones fell from the clouds, two eagles fought over the door where he was born, a lamb spoke, a fowl brought forth an angry serpent, and the world was ready to perish.'

The following is perhaps one of the most curious passages of the work, as displaying the author's mode of grafting mediæval Spain on ancient Greece:—

'Master Aristotle, who was his teacher, had all this time been shut up in his room, and had taken no sleep either by day or night. "My son," said the philosopher, "thou art a learned clerk, thou art the son of a king, and thou hast much penetration; thou hast shown from earliest infancy an extraordinary love for chivalry, and I esteem thee the most accomplished of living cavaliers. Remember at all times to take counsel with thy vassals respecting thy enterprises, and they will be more faithful to thee on account of thy conversing with them. But, above all, beware of the love of women; for if thou once become enamoured of them, their company will so engross thee, that thou wilt surely wax less valiant: nay, thou shalt be in danger of losing thy soul, which would be a great offence unto God. Beware of intrusting thy affairs to men of low birth. Be not drunken; and frequent not the taverns. Be a man of thy word, nor love nor listen to flatterers. When thou sittest in judgment, let thy sentence be righteous; and suffer neither hope of gain, nor love, nor hatred, to weigh in thy decisions. Let not thine anger appear amongst thy vassals; never eat apart from them, nor appear tired of their company, if thou wouldst retain their love. When thou ledest forth thine armies, leave not the veterans, whilst thou carriest with thee the recruits; for the former are wise in counsel, and from the battle they will not flee."

Alexander was admitted to the honour of knighthood on the feast of St Antherius; and the equipments in which he appeared on that occasion are sufficiently worthy of notice. Some were the work of Vulcan, others of the fairies; and every piece was gifted with enchanted power to strengthen the virtue, the courage, or the chastity of the wearer. 'All the riches of Pisa and Genoa would not have purchased his tunic; and as to Bucephalus, when he was harnessed, he was worth more than all Castile.' Thus accoutred, and mounted on his noble steed, Alexander sallies forth in search of the usual adventures of knight-errantry, before waging war against the Jews and Moors. At a distance from his own territories he meets King Nicholas, who demands his name and occupation. Alexander answers that he is the son of Philip and Olympias; that he is travelling through the world for the exercise of his strength, seeking adventures in deserts and plains, sparing some, and despoiling others; and that none can dare to say that they have ventured to treat

him with disrespect. Hence we see with what precedent Don Quixote reckoned Alexander the Great among knights-errant, and compared Rosinante to Bucephalus. The ancient Spanish poets knew no other heroism than that of chivalry, and had no idea of greatness but what was found in their romances.

On one occasion our author represents his hero as carried in the talons of a griffon through the air, and the world spread out beneath him as a picture, which exhibited the body of a colossus. Asia was the trunk, Europe and Africa the feet, the holy Cross the arms, and the sun and moon the eyes. The hero was taken to the antipodes and the land of darkness, and shown all the wonders of enchantment. He was, moreover, in true Arabian taste, made a conjurer, necromancer, and philosopher; the hidden secrets of nature and art were opened to him; astronomy, mineralogy, botany, and alchymy, became things familiar; and a system of zoology for the middle ages might be compiled from the minute description of animals which the poem contains.

Alexander's confession of faith is quite catholic—

———'adoro al criador,
Que es rey é obispo, é abbat, é prior.'*

Stanza 1113.

When he is described as seeking counsel from Heaven, it is remarked, 'He was a heathen, yet God heard his prayer.' His death, too, is as orthodox as that of any saint of the middle age.

This author abounds in ill-placed digressions and abstruse discussions of scholastic philosophy. He confuses the pagan mythology and the catholic calendar; continually violates all laws of time and place; and brings into Grecian story not only the chivalry of Europe, but monks, nuns, and convents—churches, altars, vigils, confessions, and masses—Mahomet and the Moors—grace and original sin—all mingled with dreams and visions of the wildest character. He indulges also in long and ridiculous disquisitions on astronomy and geography—for his hero wishes to see Toledo and Seville—while of the antipodes he speaks with incredulous scorn. Though he says, 'I do not choose to lie,' yet he assures us that, in Alexander's time, a man's voice might be heard at the distance of three days' journey; he repeats the fable of the phoenix as a matter of sober history; the acephali are with him real personages, with their heads in their bosoms; and of those valiant birds the griffons, he gives a minute and satisfactory description.

His liberties with the language would now be deemed un-

* ———'I adore the Creator,
Who is king, bishop, abbot, and prior.'

pardonable; he creates a word at will when he finds himself perplexed in his measure, or, for the sake of rhyme, frames a new termination. He alters the conjugation of verbs, latinises Castilian terms that were current, and the reverse. He changes the accent at pleasure, and errs in proper names so egregiously, that some of them cannot now be recognised in their disguise. His titles of honour may occasion a smile—such are Count Don Demosthenes, the Emperor Jupiter, Don Love, Don Phebus, Lady Fortune, and Lady Philosophy.

On the other hand there are some beautiful and appropriate comparisons:—

‘As a young hungry lion when he sees,
From his own cave, a deer among the trees,
Enraged he views the prey he cannot seize,
And his proud heart beats high.’

Many of the descriptions also are truly pictorial: that of Alexander’s tent has a great deal of the rude magnificent about it:—

And finely wrought, and round, and ample was the tent;
Two thousand valiant knights it held without restraint.
Apelles there displayed his powers magnificent,
And none but he could form a work so excellent.
Cloth of surpassing wealth the tent disclosed to view—
’Twas of the fairest silk, and of vermilion hue.
With equal beauty wove, and equal richness too;
And in the sun it shone like mirror bright and true.

Around the tent were painted the months of the year, some of whose attributes are curious. Don January had his eyes wandering everywhere, and was surrounded with wooden logs and ashes; Don February warmed his hands amid storms and sunshine; Don March watched his vineyards, equalised the days and nights, and stimulated the birds and beasts; April summoned his armies for the fight, advanced the crops, and lengthened the days; May came crowned with flowers, scattering the tints of the rainbow over the fields, singing to the nymphs of love, and preparing for the harvest; Don June ripened the grain, loaded the trees with fruit, and led on the hotter sun; July drove the sweat down the cheeks, let loose the tormenting flies, and extracted the bitter from the fresh grape; Don August obeyed the first orders of Autumn, and gave sweetness to the grape; September propped the walnut-trees, prepared the wine-press, squeezed the grape, and drove the birds from the figs; Don October went forth to labour, and to sow for the approaching winter, tasting on his way the new-fermented wine; November gathered the acorns for the swine,

and watched them beneath the oak—he watched in the twilight, for the days are short; December killed the swine—the mornings are covered with dark mists; this is the time of constant frost.

The following may be taken as a fair specimen of Lorenzo's powers of poetical description:—

It was the month of May,
In the bright and glorious spring,
When the birds in concert sweet
On the budding branches sing;
When the meadows and the plains
Are robed in vesture green;
And the mateless lady sighs
Despairing o'er the scene.

A gentle tempting time
For loving hearts to meet;
For the flowers are blossoming,
And the winds are fresh and sweet;
And gathered in a ring,
The maidens wear away,
In mirthful talk and song,
The blithe and sunny day.

Soft fall the gentle dews,
An unfelt freshening rain,
The corn puts forth the hope
Of harvests rich in grain;
The down-cheeked stripling now
Is wedded to his love;
And ladies lightly clad,
In bounding dances move.

For love o'er young and old
Now holds its mightiest sway,
And siesta's hour to grace,
They pluck the field-flowers gay;
While each to other tells
How love is ever blest;
But the tenderest suit they own,
Is the happiest and the best.

The day is long and bright,
The fields are green once more;
The birds have ceased to moult,
And their mourning time is o'er.
No hornet yet appears,
With sting of venom keen,
But the youths in wrestling strive
Half-naked on the green.

'Twas then that Alexander,
Of Persia conquering king,
Moved by the fragrant call
Of that delightful spring,
Throughout his wide domain
Proclaimed a general court,
And not a noble of the land
But thither made resort.

Of the author of this ancient and curious poem nothing is known but the name, as he has left it in the last stanza, which we insert, both to show the measure and rhyme, and the ancient mode of acknowledging the authorship:—

' Si quisierdes saber quien escribió este ditado,
Johan Lorenzo, bon clerigo é ondrado,
Segura de Astorga, de mañias bien temprado.
El día del juicio Dios sea mio pagado. Amen.'

GONZALO DE BERCEO.

1190-1264.

Gonzalo de Berceo, who flourished about the year 1221, was a monk of the order of St Benedict, and his whole life was spent in the monastery of St Millan. His extant poems are nine in number, and contain above three thousand verses, which have been carefully collected by Sanchez. They are important chiefly as exhibiting the progress which Castilian poetry had made since the composition of 'The Cid' and 'Alexander the Great.' Berceo's language manifests a subordination to the rules of grammar, and his metre to those of versification. His measure is Alexandrine, and the accent occupies the place indicated in the *arte mayor*, the cæsura being generally in the middle of the line, instead of continually changing its situation, as in 'The Cid.' The verses are arranged in quartets, each line of the four terminating in the same rhyme. This is the metre which was denominated *versos de arte mayor*, and was used in the graver compositions of the Castilians; while the more lively measure of the *redondilla* was reserved for their romances and songs. Berceo was master of the former style; and it was considered the most dignified, though it certainly was the most monotonous of all the Spanish metres.

When we speak of regular versification, however, it must not be understood that any of these compositions can stand the test of scanning according to the classical rules of quantity and accent. The prosody common to all the romance dialects consisted merely in a regular accentuation, and the repose of the cæsura; but whether each verse contained twelve, thirteen, or fourteen syllables, or whether these syllables were long or short, appear to have been matters absolutely indifferent.

Except in a philological and critical point of view, it must be admitted that the writings of Berceo possess little interest or value, on account of the subjects on which he chose to employ his pen. He had scarcely an idea beyond the walls of his monastery, and his themes are selected from what may be called the mythology of his church—consisting of legends of saints, and memoirs of recluses, with the marvellous details of the miracles performed by them in person while they lived, and after death through their continued influence. Berceo assumes to himself the humble title of a prose versifier, yet we find occasional passages manifesting an imagination which might have entitled the author to be a poet, had his genius been cultivated under happier circumstances:—

To me it once befell when in Romeria * gone,
To tread a fertile plain with greenest turf o'ergrown,
And many and many a flower was o'er its bosom thrown;
It was indeed a spot to bless a weary one.

The flowers gave forth the sweets which sweetest flow'rets
hold,

Refreshing soul and sense with the fragrance they unfold,
And the streams rolled wandering on, rejoicing as they rolled,
In the chilly winter warm, in the summer season cold.

And many a noble tree put forth its riches there,
The pomegranate and fig, the apple and the pear,
And other fairest fruits, salubrious and rare,
All in their richest bloom—all fresh and sweet and fair.

The verdure of the fields, the flowers so gay and sweet,
The shade beneath the trees, so soft, and cool, and meet,
Refreshed my wearied frame, and eased my tottering feet;
Life well might be sustained by breath so exquisite.

I never never saw so privileged a spot,
Or felt so soft a breeze, or such a calm cool grot;
I threw my garments down, and wrapt in gentle thought,
Lay 'neath a lonely tree, and blest my happy lot.

* A joyous pilgrimage in honour of a saint.

A thousand thoughts of joy and peace came o'er me then,
Birds sang melodiously in one consenting strain;
Such harmony was ne'er produced by mortal men,
And minstrel powers shall ne'er produce such sounds again.

And now 'twas gently soft, and now 'twas boldly loud,
And now one voice was heard, and now a choir-like crowd;
The charm of song was there, and all submission bowed,
And discord fled, for all with music were endowed.

The organ or the harp, the psaltery or the lyre,
The tongue's clear melody, and the accordant choir,
Art's instruments—these never could inspire
Such harmony of soul, such satisfied desire.

The field was beautiful, 'twas always fresh and green,
Nor cold nor heat could change its ever verdant sheen;
'Twas an eternal spring, as it had ever been,
And never storm disturbed its face of joy serene.

I threw me down in haste on this enchanted ground,
The cares and sorrows fled which long had whelmed me
round;
All thoughts of grief and wo in ecstasy were drowned:
Oh happy, happy he who such a rest hath found!

There men and birds might share the flow'rets at their will,
The more they plucked, the more put forth their beauties still;
As if they loved that field with infant buds to fill,
Where one was plucked, two grew; 'twas like the heavenly hill
Which God called Paradise.

But we are not permitted to enjoy this simply as the picture of rural beauty and repose, for the author proceeds to explain its allegorical meaning. We are pilgrims to a better land, but have one beautiful restingplace to refresh our weary souls. This oasis in life's desert is our Blessed Lady—the unchanging green is her virginity—the fountains, the evangelists—the shade of the trees, songs of devotion—the groves, her miracles—the birds, saints and martyrs—and the flowers, the names of the Virgin!

The above is allowed to be a choice specimen; but the following grave narration may be considered a fair example of the general character of Berceo's writings:—

'There was a wicked thief, who loved robbing better than going to church. If he had other vices, they are not recorded, and it would be unjust to condemn him for that of which we are ignorant. Sure it is he was a thief; if anything else, may Christ, in whom we trust, forgive him. With all his evil qualities, he had one excellence—he

believed in the glorious Virgin, and always bowed to her majesty with his whole heart. He said his Ave-Maria and other Scripture by rote, and kneeling before her image, obtained her good-will. But he who in evil walks in evil falls—he was caught in the act of stealing, and no device could save him. He was condemned to the gibbet; a bandage was tied over his eyes; and he was hanged on the tight-drawn rope. He was suspended as high as was deemed necessary, and his executioners left him for dead. But had they only known what they afterwards knew, they would never have perpetrated the deed. The glorious Mother, accustomed to watch over her servants, and assist them in the hour of need, mindful of his past services, put her precious hands under his feet: she held him up—he felt no harm—he never was more happy in his life.

‘At the end of the third day, his relations, friends, and acquaintances came. Sad and sorrowful, they approached to cut him down from the gallows; but they found him not only living, but uninjured and cheerful. He said his feet had been so well supported, he should have felt no harm by hanging a year.

‘So soon as those who had hanged him heard this, they thought the knot had been badly tied, and they wished they had rather cut off his head; but had they done so, they would have been equally disappointed. The whole multitude agreed that it was the fault of the knot. It was determined that he must be beheaded; but not with an axe or a sword, as that would be an affront to their noble city. So the wicked youths went to cut off his head with a pair of shears large and sharp. But holy Mary again put her hands under the shears, and even the neckcloth of his throat remained whole. When it thus appeared that he could not be injured, the glorious Mother being his protector, they relinquished their design, and permitted him to go his way in peace, and live on as long as God might suffer him. He reformed his life, he abandoned his follies, and died on the very day that his course was completed.’

At the end of these voluminous effusions, the offspring of superstitious credulity, we find a Spanish translation of the old Latin hymn, *Veni Creator*, which has long been known in our own language, having been embodied in the liturgy of the national church of England.*

ALPHONSO X. OF CASTILE.

This monarch was born in the year 1221, and ascended the throne in 1252. He was surnamed the Wise, or the Learned, chiefly on account of his acquaintance with astronomy and

* See the Ordination service.

chemistry, and is well known as the propounder of an astronomical theory which subjected him to the charge of impiety. It has no claim, however, to originality, being merely a commentary on the complicated system of Ptolemy, to which Alphonso had directed his particular attention.

But he was desirous also of poetical fame, and embodied much of his learning and science in verse. Among other productions, there is a work entitled the *Book of Treasure*, or the 'Philosopher's Stone,' professing to contain an exposition of the science of alchymy, which had long been the favourite study of our princely author. He says that 'God first gave him the knowledge of his holy faith; next that of the material world; then he bestowed on him the kingdom of his fathers; and last of all, to enable him to sustain it worthily, the high prize of the Philosopher's Stone.

The only part of this poem that is intelligible is the introduction, consisting of eleven stanzas, wherein the author relates the manner in which he obtained the great secret. They may be thus rendered:—

Fame brought this strange intelligence to me,
That in Egyptian lands there lived a sage
Who read the secrets of the coming age,
And could anticipate futurity :
He judged the stars and all their aspects ; he
The darksome veil of hidden things withdrew ;
Of unborn days the mysteries he knew,
And saw the future as the past we see.

An eager thirst for knowledge moved me then ;
My pen, my tongue, were humbled—in that hour
I laid my crown in dust—so great the power
Of passionate desire o'er mortal men.
I sent my earnest prayers with a proud train
Of messengers, who bore him generous measures
Of honours and of lands, and golden treasures,
And all in holy meekness—'twas in vain !

The sage repelled me, but most courteously :
" You are a mighty monarch, sire ; but these,
These have no gift to charm, no power to please,
Silver nor gold, however bright they be.
Sire, I would serve you ; but what profits me
That wealth which more abundantly is mine ?
Let your possessions bless you, let them shine,
As Mais prays, in all prosperity."

I sent the stateliest of my ships ; it sought
The Alexandrian port ; the wise man passed

Across the Middle Sea; and came at last
With all the gentleness of friendliest thought:
I studied wisdom; and his wisdom taught
Each varied movement of the shifting sphere—
He was most dear, as knowledge should be dear—
Love, honour, are by truth and wisdom bought.

He made the magic Stone, and taught me too;
We toiled together first, but soon alone
I formed the marvellous gold-creating stone,
And oft did I my lessening wealth renew;
Varied the form and fabric, and not few,
This treasure's elements, the simplest best,
And noblest here ingeniously confessed
I shall disclose in this my verse to you.

And what a list of nations have pursued
This treasure! Need I speak of the Chaldee,
Or the untired sons of learned Araby!
All, all in chase of this most learned good.
Egypt and Syria, and the tribes so rude
Of the Orient—Saracens and Indians—all
Labouring in vain, though oft the echoes fall
Upon the west, of their song's amplitude.

If what is passing now I have foretold,
In honest truth and calm sincerity,
So will I tell you of the events to be
Without deception—and the prize I hold
Shall be in literary lore enrolled:
Such power, such empire, never can be won
By ignorance or listlessness: to none
But to the learned state, my truths be told.

So, like the Theban Sphynx, will I propound
My mysteries, and in riddles truth will speak:
Deem them not idle words, for, if you seek,
Through their dense darkness, light may oft be found.
Muse, meditate, and look in silence round—
Hold no communion of vain language—learn
And treasure up the lore—if you discern
What's here, in hieroglyphic letters bound.

My soul hath spoken and foretold—I bring
The voices of the stars to chime with mine;
He who shall share with me this gift divine,
Shall share with me the privilege of a king;
Mine is no mean, no paltry offering;
Cupidity itself must be content
With such a portion as I here present—
And Midas' wealth to ours a trifling thing.

So when our work in this our sphere was done,
 Deucalion to wend sublimely o'er the rest;
 And proudly dominant he stood confessed
 On the tenth mountain—thence looked kindly on
 The sovereign sire who offered him a crown,
 Or empires vast for his reward, or gold
 From his vast treasure, for his heirs, untold—
 So bold and resolute was Deucalion.

I'll give you honest counsel, if you be
 My kinsman or my countryman, if e'er
 This gift be yours, its treasures all confer
 On him who shall unveil the mystery;
 Offer him all, and offer cheerfully,
 And offer most sincerely; weak and small
 Is your best offering—though you offer all—
 Your recompense may be eternity!

This introduction is followed by thirty-five stanzas of eight lines each, composed in cipher, with an alphabet-key at the end. According to this, every letter has a variety of representatives, and no busy idler has yet been found patient and laborious enough to unlock the door of the sacred arcanum; richer than the mines of Sinbad, the mines of Potosi, or the fable-eclipsing soil of California. It must be humiliating enough to all true believers in the alchymic art to learn that this same Alphonso was deposed for his subjects for alloying the silver coin with copper, and for using it as pure.

But though Alphonso was not a good ruler, and though his metallic tastes led him into serious error both in theory and practice, yet he deserves a high place among the early literati of Spain. There certainly is little or no trace of poetic genius in his verses; but in their harmonious and ingenious construction we discern the author's careful cultivation of the Castilian language. The increasing purity and accuracy thus introduced must have enabled the poetic genius of the people to develop with more and more freedom and vigour, while the royal example alone was calculated to prove a powerful stimulus to the nation whose pride was flattered by the literary reputation of their monarch. But this is not all that Alphonso did for the language and literature of his country. He attracted to his court many of the philosophers and learned men of the East; he introduced among his subjects the sciences, arts, and manufactures of the Moors; and the astronomical tables which still bear his name were drawn up by him, with the assistance of the learned Jew, Isaac Ben-Said, from the library of Cordova. He caused the most celebrated works of the Eastern philosophers to be translated into the vernacular. The

Holy Scriptures also, accompanied by a paraphrase of sacred history, were, by his order, rendered into this language: besides a 'General Chronicle of Spain,' a 'History of the Conquest of the Holy Land,' and several other works deemed worthy of popular attention. Finally, he not only commanded that Spanish should be used in all legal and judicial proceedings, but he enriched the prose literature of the country with a code of laws entitled *Las Siete Partidas* 'The Seven Talents': a work no less remarkable for the depth of thought which it manifests, than for the simplicity and elegance of its style. The following is a fair specimen of these *Partidas*—

Partida V. Titulo I. Ley 10.

'What obligation is in the loan, and what penalty falls upon him who does not return it?

'Such obligation is connected with the loan, which men make one to another of things that can be counted, weighed, or measured, that so soon as the thing passes into the power of him to whom it is lent, though fire consume it, or water bear it away, or it be lost by any other means whatever, it is lost to him who received it as a loan, and not to him who lent it. Besides, we say that if the borrower do not return it at the time he ought, he is obliged to pay that penalty which is binding on this account. And if the penalty be not imposed, he ought to pay the damages and the injuries which the lender received in suing for what he lent him. And in order to make this statement sure, the heirs of those who received the loan are also under the same obligations as they themselves were.*

This code, though little appreciated in Alphonso's own day, was destined to become the basis of Spanish jurisprudence both in the old world and in the new.

Being driven from his throne by his factious nobles, the unhappy monarch addressed a pathetic letter to one of the Guzmans, then at the court of the king of Fez. It is dated in 1282, and runs thus:

'COUSIN DON ALONZO PEREZ DE GUZMAN.—My affliction is singular, because it has fallen from such a height that it will be seen afar, and on me who was the friend of all the world; therefore in all the world will this my misfortune be known; and its sharpness which I suffer unjustly from my son, assisted by my counts and my prelates, who instead of establishing peace between us, have put mischief, not

* The most ancient monument of the use of the Romance Castilian language, in prose, is the version of the 'Evangelio' ('Forum Judicum'), made in the time of Ferdinand III., who began the *Partidas*, which were completed by Alphonso X. in the year 1280.

secretly or covertly, but openly and boldly. And I find no protection nor champion in my own land, neither have I deserved it at their hands, except for the good I have done them. And now since in my own country they deceive who should serve me, it is needful that I seek abroad for some that will kindly care for me; and since they of Castile have been unfaithful, none can blame me that I ask help among those of Benamarin.* For since my sons are my enemies, it cannot be wrong that I take my enemies to be my sons—enemies according to the law, but not of free-will. And such a one is the good King Abn-Jusaf; for I love and value him, and he will not despise me or betray me since we are at truce. I know also how much you are his, and that he loves you, and with good reason, and how much he will do by your counsel. Therefore look not at things past, but at things present; consider to what lineage you belong, and that at some future time I may do you good; and if I do it not, that your own good deed will be its own good reward. Therefore, my cousin, do thus much for me with my friend and your lord, that on the pledge of my most precious crown and its jewels he may lend me as much as he thinks just. And if you can obtain this aid for me, let it not delay to come quickly; but think how good the friendship of your lord will be to me if it comes through your hands. And so may God's friendship be with you. Done in Seville, my only loyal city, in the thirtieth year of my reign, and the first of these my troubles.

(Signed) THE KING.

This monarch, now distinguished among the founders of his country's intellectual fame, died in exile two years after the date of the above letter, leaving behind him the reputation of being the 'wisest fool in Christendom.'

THE EARLIEST ROMANCES.

The works of Juan Lorenzo and of Berceo are calculated to convey an impression, at once vivid and correct, of the monkish literature of the thirteenth century; the absence of truth in the incidents and feelings too plainly showing how entirely the inspirations of nature were banished from their gloomy cloisters. In fine contrast with these wild effusions appears the martial poetry of Spain, which, like our own popular tales and ballads, had its birth obscurely among the people. We can scarcely be said to have seen even its infancy in 'The Cid,' or in any of the compositions we have yet noticed, as these are for the most part merely rugged versifications of matters which are the proper province of prose. But we now call the reader's attention to the earliest of the

*A race of African princes, who reigned in Morocco, and subdued all Western Africa.

romances which form the true commencement of Spanish poetry. They are anonymous and dateless—Iliads without a Homer. Their name was derived from the popular language in which they were composed; and as the taste for this kind of productions was insatiable, so the number of them defies calculation. They were transmitted from mouth to mouth, and from generation to generation, long before any one thought of committing them to writing, and thus they changed their shape with every variation of the national language. Consequently, in the form in which these romances now exist, few of them can be attributed to an earlier date than the fourteenth century, when they were deemed worthy of being collected into a volume. It is therefore usual with writers on Spanish literature to defer the notice of these compositions till the period when they thus excited public attention, and when their history assumes some degree of certainty.

It has been somewhat hastily concluded that the Spanish imagination was during this time completely filled with the national heroes, and that the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table was unknown in the Peninsula till late in the fourteenth century, when the 'Amadis de Gaula' became the type and the poetical head of the Spanish family of chivalrous romances. But there are a few recently brought to light which are allowed to belong to the earlier period of which we are now treating. True they have by some been ascribed to Provençal poets; but a more careful examination has led to the belief that they must be attributed to some unknown bards of Castile or Arragon, who probably at the court of Alphonso X. were introduced by Provençal poets to that great mine of chivalrous fiction from which the wild fables of Ariosto, Spencer, and Wieland are derived. Their language bears the strongest similarity to that of the early poems collected by Sanchez, but considerably intermixed with Provençal expressions, easily accounted for by the circumstance that this language had acquired much greater precision than the Castilian, and was at the period to which these romances are attributed, a very frequent medium of conversation among the better classes in Spain. The troubadours were falling into disrepute in France, and were becoming highly popular in some parts of the Peninsula, where the *gay science* was now cultivated with great enthusiasm. The Castilian poets could not fail to improve by the intercourse thus opened to them with men who had become famous throughout Europe for their elegant lays. It is worth observing also that those whose works we are now considering refer again and again to the poems of Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and Statius. The acquaintance thus manifested with Greek and Latin classics must have given them a vast superiority both over their predecessors

in Castile, and over the troubadours of France, who very rarely possessed this accomplishment.

The most surprising feature of these anonymous productions is the truthfulness, we might almost say the profoundness, with which they depict the passions of love and jealousy. In this respect they are truly dramatic, and superior to everything else that has been preserved from the same age. In style they display the simplicity and clearness of the Castilian romance, as distinguished from the enigmatic and obscure construction of the *Gai-Saber*; and instead of being composed of the hard monosyllables of the Provençal, the words are so prolonged as to admit of varied accent and metrical harmony.

GEOFFREY.

The romance of Geoffrey, which is attributed to the end of the thirteenth century, is the most perfect of these productions, and the only one we shall here notice. It approaches the character of the regular epic more nearly than any other belonging to the middle age, exhibiting unity of action, delicate delineations of character, episodes in harmony with the principal incidents, and all tending, directly or indirectly, to bring about the final object. An abundance of supernatural agency is introduced—fairies, sorcerers, giants, dwarfs—whose presence is intended to exalt the prowess of the hero. As this work is very scarce, and has never, we believe, been published in this country, we subjoin a brief analysis of the whole, with translations of the most interesting passages :—

Whilst King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table are celebrating the Feast of Pentecost, a stranger, armed cap-a-pie, and mounted on a black horse, suddenly forces his way into the centre of the court, enters the saloon where the knights are assembled, and without any provocation, lays several of them dead at the feet of the queen. Having committed this atrocity, he announces his name—Tolá of Redmont; and threatening the king that he will repeat this exploit at the return of each Pentecost, he takes his departure with precipitation, while Arthur and his court are filled with consternation at the unexpected attack. At this moment Geoffrey, son of the Count of Devon, enters the hall, learns what has just taken place, and throws himself at the feet of the king, entreating him to confer upon him the honours of chivalry, in order that he may pursue the assassin, and avenge the outrage which has been committed against his prince. Arthur, after some hesitation, on account of the great youth and high rank of the suppliant, accedes to his request,

bestows on him the dignity of knighthood, and presents him with a sword. Thus completely equipped, Geoffrey sallies forth in quest of the miscreant. In the course of his adventures he encounters giants, dwarfs, wizards, and a number of petty tyrants who have committed all kinds of violence, insulted and dishonoured many fair ladies of rank, and ravaged the country with fire and sword. It must be observed that each and all of these adventures have reference more or less direct to Tolá. The wrongs which Geoffrey redresses have all been committed by the friends, relatives, allies, or emissaries of the tyrant; and at every encounter the young cavalier obtains additional information regarding the object of his pursuit.

After proving victorious in many a hard-fought battle, and escaping miraculously from many an appalling danger, he reaches the vicinity of a castle whose commanding position and surpassing magnificence bespeak a rich and noble owner. The first thing that attracts his attention is a delicious garden, which he enters:—

‘ Now Geoffrey to an orchard came,
Enclosed with marble all around;
And trees of every kind and name
Were in that fair enclosure found.
Fresh herbs and flowers of various hue
Diffused such fragrance o’er the place,
It seemed a paradise to view.
And when the sun had run his race,
Sweet birds flocked hither, and began
A concert of such melody,
Nor instrument nor voice of man
Could emulate its harmony.
All night they warbled, till the day
Shot from the east, and hushed their lay.

This orchard did belong to one
Called Brunisent, fairest of the fair;
Her castle was yeleft Montbrone.
But deem not it was single there;
Others, and many she possessed,
But chief of all Montbrone appeared,
In seigniory above the rest.
No parents’ care the damsel cheered,
Nor lord nor brother; all were sped,
And she, sole heiress, bore the yoke.

The castle was well furnished
With minstrels, treasure, and young folk,
Courteous and gay, who all day long
Revelled and danced to harp and song.

Jongleurs there were of every class,
 Who tales recited of old times,
 Of foreign wars that came to pass,
 And tournaments in other climes.
 Instruction to the fair they gave
 How to discourse in polished phrase,
 And live as courtly ladies live ;
 How to bestow, how merit praise.
 Is love the subject ?—then they teach,
 In courteous guise, how to refuse,
 Or grant the boon their swains beseech.
 In sooth, 'twas difficult to choose ;
 For all the knights who flourished there
 Were comely, young, and débonnaire. . . .

Five hundred dames, a bevy bright,
 Are in the train of Brunisent,
 Serving her pleasure day and night ;
 But she in beauty's firmament,
 The brightest star surpasses all.
 Search, if thou wilt, the world all over,
 In palace, cot, or baron's hall,
 So fair a maid thou'lt not discover.
 Her eyes, her skin, such charms possess,
 A glance suffices to erase
 All trace of other loveliness !
 Fresher and brighter is her face
 Than snow just on a branch congealed,
 Or dew in lily's cup concealed.
 Her vermil lips seem to disclose
 How Love his token should impress.
 And yet she mourns some secret woes :
 For seven long years, or more or less,
 Four times a day she weeps forlorn,
 And thrice each night her couch she leaves
 To vent her sorrow till the morn.
 'Tis strange that one who ceaseless grieves
 Can live and sleep ! At break of day
 She to the orchard hies, and there
 Hears Philomel, whose plaintive lay
 Lulls for a moment her despair ;
 Sudden she wakes again to moan ;
 Her ladies echo groan for groan ;
 And weep her sorrows as their own.

Sir Geoffrey, from his steed alighting,
 Entered the orchard, passing through
 A lofty gate of work inviting.
 The bridle from his steed he drew,

And left him at full liberty
 On the rich pasture to carouse.
 Well satisfied, I ween, was he.
 The knight now placed upon his brows
 His radiant helm : nor noise, nor talk,
 Nor aught that in the place befell,
 His strong desire to sleep could balk.
 He seemed o'erpowered by magic spell;
 He heard not, saw not ; but oppressed,
 Sunk on the verdant sward to rest. . . .

Brunesent now to her private bower
 Retired with those who served her bidding,
 Expecting at the accustomed hour
 To hear the birds in concert sing,
 Who still at nightfall with their lays
 Sang her tormented heart to sleep.
 She nothing heard : in sore amaze
 She marked the palfrey in the keep,
 And stranger knight. " Who guards the hall?
 Evil to me will hence betide :
 Haste, hither call my seneschal."
 He comes. " What hast thou heard ?" she cried.
 " The man who in the orchard lies
 Projects some felon enterprise,
 The birds in terror quit the bough.
 'Tis he hath caused them to be mute ;
 No slumber seals my eyelids now.
 Go, see if he be man or brute :
 If man, let him be seized and slain !"¹⁰

The seneschal proceeds to the garden, where he finds the knight in a deep sleep. With much difficulty he awakes him. After a moment of altercation, Geoffrey, finding that his inquisitor persists in importuning and preventing him from the enjoyment of the repose he so much needs, mounts his courser, and with one blow stretches him on the ground. He again dismounts, enters into the garden, and once more resigns himself to sleep. The seneschal, wounded and terror-smitten, returns to the palace, where Brunesent asks him—

" What hast thou in the orchard found ?"
 " Lady, I found an armed knight ;
 No better scours the country round :
 But sleep o'erpowered him with such might,
 We scarce could rouse him from his trance."
 " And so thou left'st the cavalier

* *Lexique Roman*, tome i. p. 79. Bruce-White, tome ii. pp. 345-350.

Lord of his shield and murderous lance!
 Why was he not conducted here?
 'Twas vilely done! By God's own name,
 No food I taste till I behold
 The felon hung!" "In sooth, fair dame,
 I could not force a knight so bold."
 "No!" cried the lady; "sound the horn!
 Let all my knights avenge the scorn!"
 Loud blew the blast: the cavaliers,
 Armed cap-a-pie, five hundred strong,
 Rushed to the hall, where, bathed in tears,
 She sat indignant at the wrong.
 "Barons!" she cried, "a felon wight
 Hath forced mine orchard, and alarmed
 The birds, who all the livelong night
 With their sweet notes my sorrow charmed.
 Such is his pride, he sets at nought
 My seneschal; though summoned oft,
 He comes not, summoned or besought.
 I swear unless his head be doffed,
 Unless a painful death he die,
 I quit the court, my dames and I!"

On this appeal to their fidelity, the barons dash in a body into the garden, where they find Geoffrey still sleeping. One of them pricks him with his lance; he awakes, and irritated with this new provocation, he resolves instantly to take vengeance. A combat ensues; three of the most powerful and valiant of the troop are wounded, and laid in the dust. The others, impatient of the delay, and despairing of being able to conquer this terrible stranger in single combat, rush upon him together, disarm, and carry him prisoner before their sovereign lady. Brunesent, informed of the affair, and especially of the mortal wounds received by Simon lo Kos, the bravest of her champions, addresses Geoffrey in these words:—

"Art thou the man annoy'st me so,
 And spread'st such terror o'er my land?"
 "No, sovereign lady; trust me, no!
 Wert thou assailed by hostile band,
 I would defend thee, on my word."
 "'Tis false! Hast thou not entered late
 Mine orchard, and with lance and sword
 My champion mauled, now near his fate?"
 "'Tis true! But he commenced the fray;
 He broke my slumbers, gored me thrice
 With his keen lance while tranced I lay.
 I woke, and felled the hero twice;

Yet had I known he was thy knight,
 Though he had doubled his offence,
 Or tripled it with hellish spite,
 Scatheless he had departed thence.”

The lady, far from being appeased by the humility of his language, swears by all the saints that he shall be executed immediately.

‘But Geoffrey knew that transient ire
 Inspired the threat, and undismayed,
 Gloated with rapture and desire
 On the enraged but beauteous maid.
 Her brow, her neck, divinely fair,
 Her mouth and eyes, with love replete,
 Subdued his heart, and triumphed there. . . .

“Lady,” he cried, “my doom I meet
 Submissively; but this I crave:
 One moment to unload my heart.
 Consign me to a timeless grave,
 If so thou wilt: thou stronger art
 In virgin smock, more feared by me,
 Than ten bold knights in panoply!”

Soothed by his gentle words and mien,
 The lady’s anger cools apace,
 For Love, a witness of the scene,
 Had pierced her in the tenderest place.
 Fain would she pardon if she could,
 But dreading evil tongues, she fears
 To do or utter what she would.
 In sooth, though callous she appears,
 She means no greater ill to him
 Than to herself, in life or limb.’

She now commands her seneschal to prepare for the knight a bed, amply furnished with cushions and coverlets, adding strict orders that he should be surrounded with a guard of one hundred brave cavaliers, ostensibly in order to prevent his flight, but in reality to provide him with all that he might desire to have.

‘Fair Brunisent, from the world retired,
 Courts in her chamber brief repose,
 But tastes not sleep, though much desired,
 For love forbids her eyes to close.
 Love makes her change her pillow’s place,
 Turn and return it, sink and rise:
 “Oh God! what torment! what disgrace!
 How veil my state from curious eyes!

Most sure I love ! I feel it here :
 Alternate passions fiercely rage ;
 My heart is racked by hope and fear ;
 All these a dreadful fate presage.
 Deprived of him, I cannot live !
 To such a thought why utterance give ?
 Fool that I am to rave so madly !
 To love, I know not whom ! A youth
 Who, whilst I languish here so sadly,
 May fly to-morrow, if in sooth
 I pardon him. Let us dismiss
 This stranger's image : oh, my heart !
 Thou knowest not what his lineage is.
 If Love must needs essay his dart,
 Richer and fairer knights than he
 Would deem them honoured by my choice ;
 There's not a monarch but would be
 Delighted to obtain my voice.
 But ah, what folly ! where discover
 So fond, so true, so brave a lover ?
 Hath he not vanquished and o'erthrown
 Three champions of my court in arms,
 The bravest in our tournays known ?
 Where find his paragon in charms ?
 Well schooled he seems, in speech discreet,
 I heed not what his fortune prove,
 Nor wish each gossip should repeat,
 ' His wealth procured our lady's love.' "

The monologue continues through the next thirty verses in the repetition of the same sentiments in different words—namely, that a lover recommended by his intellectual and physical qualities ought to be preferred to one who possesses only titles and riches. But we pass over the rest of the lady's inward reasonings and fond comparisons, with the arguments against the object of her affection a thousand times suggested and refuted. As soon as the matin-bell tolled on the following day, all was uproar and confusion at the castle. The vassals crowd around it, tear their hair, beat their breasts, and utter the most furious imprecations against Geoffrey. The cause of their rage is not clearly explained, but we must suppose that they had been incited by the relatives or friends of the wounded champions. Geoffrey, hearing the noise, seizes his arms, and rushes out of the castle. He is assailed on all sides by men armed with swords, daggers, and other weapons, and he owes his safety from a violent death only to his strong coat of mail and impenetrable buckler. Stunned by the numerous blows he has received, he is left for dead on the pavement. The rage of his infuriated adversaries being satiated, they retire to

He embraces the opportunity thus afforded to enter the great hall, which he finds deserted. He sits on the couch, musing upon the savage and inexorable prejudices of this people, the prejudices which they have put upon him, and the imminent danger to which his life is exposed. The conclusion of his reflections is, understanding his attachment to Bruneseut, he resolves to take to immediate flight. He secretly mounts his charger, and with a deep and heavy sigh he quits the castle unperturbed. We now return to the lady :—

Bruneseut, whose passion knew no pause,
Quits her sad couch, and seeks the hall,
Feigning that illness is the cause.
She meets and asks the seneschal
A thousand questions in a breath :
“Where is the knight ? Perhaps, oh grief,
He’s slain ! When ?—where ?—who caused his death !”
“Lady,” replies the veteran chief,
“I’ll truly tell each circumstance.
When all were risen at dawn of day,
As is our wont, with sword and lance,
The knight craved leave to join the fray ;
He sallied forth, thine host aloof,
And had his body been composed
Of tempered steel, the bootless proof
Had yielded to such odds opposed.
Five hundred blows upon his head
Fell rife as hail. No doubt he lies
A breathless corpse on yonder bed !”

“Wretch that I am !” the lady cries,
“Reckless, insensate, to confide
Such captive to such custody !
Had I detained him by my side,
My bower his prison—safe with me
He yet had lived to bless my sight !”
Now to the bed the lady came,
Thinking to kiss the breathless knight,
And, all forgetful of her fame,
With trembling hand the sheet she raised.
But when she found no Geoffrey there,
Like one by sudden frenzy crazed,
She thus gave vent to her despair :
“Traitors ! why have you wronged me so ?
By Christ and the blest saints I swear,*
Had all the fiends who dwell below

* It must be admitted that the lady swears *con amore*. Our version in this respect is tame in comparison with the original.

Conveyed him thither, from the abyss
Ye should redeem him ! Quickly bring
My loved one back, or, if remiss,
Each felon on the tree shall swing ! ”

The seneschal and other cavaliers, perceiving that their mistress was perfectly serious in her threats, set out in pursuit of the bird that had flown, taking the most direct way to the court of Arthur, whither they presumed that Geoffrey had directed his flight. The latter, committing himself to Providence, fled at full speed, giving his horse the reins. In his way he encountered many adventures, which we stop not to recount, and of every one whom he met he sought information concerning Tolá. The people, groaning under the iron yoke of the despot, but fearing to reveal the cause of their terror, suspect all the while that Geoffrey is a spy sent by him to observe their conduct, and to discover their complaints. This is the cause of the ungracious reception which he has already so often met. Nevertheless, on every occasion he obtains some new intelligence to guide him to the abode of the tyrant. Among others, he meets a hermit, who, after hearing the recital of his story, sends him to the castle of Ogier of Cliart, where he will be sure to find a hospitable reception, and to gain some certain information respecting the miscreant. Geoffrey loses not a moment in following this counsel. After two days' journey, he arrives at the castle, delivers to Ogier a message from the hermit, reveals his own name and that of his father, divulges the object of his travels, and intreats his host to lend him aid in the execution of this great enterprise. No sooner has Ogier heard the name of the Count of Devon, than he recognises in his guest the son of his oldest and dearest companion in arms. This circumstance immediately produces reciprocal confidence. The old warrior, himself the victim of Tolá's tyranny and treachery, gives to Geoffrey the most exact instructions respecting him ; and having with difficulty induced the young knight to spend one or two days in his castle, he accompanies him a certain distance, enjoining him to visit the residence of a wounded knight—another object of the tyrant's cruelty—who, as soon as he shall have heard the name of Ogier, will give him all the information he can desire. The two friends separate. Geoffrey pursues his lonely way, but not without encountering new obstacles and a new series of adventures. Among others, he finds a young lady on the point of being carried off by a terrible giant. The blood of the young cavalier boils in his veins—he flies to her assistance, and kills the giant. But what is his surprise, and the thrilling interest he feels in his protégée, when he learns from her own mouth that *she is the only daughter of the kind host he has just left.*

she had been walking in the wood with her aged mother, when she had the misfortune to attract the notice of the monster, and to fall into his hands. Geoffrey informs her of his acquaintance with her father, and proposes to carry her with him to the castle of the wounded knight. She readily consents—mounts the palfrey behind her deliverer, and they arrive at the castle before sunset. Geoffrey is introduced to the invalid, to whom he delivers the message of Ogier. A venerable dame, the companion of the infirm knight, recognises the young lady, who relates to her the piteous story of her abduction, and describes the gallantry of our hero in the rescue. Geoffrey, on his part, informs the lady of the motives of his enterprise, and becomes frantic with rage on learning from her that Tolá, after having perfidiously assassinated the father of the wounded knight, and violently taken possession of his domains, had sent the latter loaded with chains to this castle. She informs him, besides, that every year, about the feast of St John the Baptist, the tyrant makes a practice of coming to the castle, in order to assure himself that his prisoner is well guarded, as well as to witness an ignominious chastisement to which he is annually subjected. 'This is the eve of the dreaded day; and scarcely has the lady ended her recital, when one announces the arrival of Tolá, accompanied by his satellites. The unhappy captive is bound with thongs preparatory to his punishment. They are on the point of carrying him to the top of the mountain on which he is usually beaten, when Geoffrey interposes, and swears by the faith of a cavalier that he will not suffer the perpetration of this infamous cruelty. The report of this unexpected interference is immediately carried to the despot:—

'Tolá is in his tower's retreat,
And having heard the messenger,
Descends, and straight to Geoffrey flies,
To learn what his intentions are.
"I wish, Sir Knight," incensed he cries,
"To learn what insolence and pride
Tempt thee to trespass on my land.
Descend, and lay thine arms aside!
Meanwhile my lawful prisoner stand."
"Tarry, my lord—more haste, less speed:
I'll tell thee why I hither come—
For the brave knight to intercede,
Whom thou to stripes dost basely doom.
I pray thee, by thy name renowned,
By all thy feats in chivalry,
Let him, for my sake, be unbound,
So please thee, tender clemency.

Should he henceforward manifest
 Or pride, or malice, or desire
 To wage thee battle, or molest,
 Then on his head discharge thine ire !”
 “ In God’s name ! thou hast lost, I trow,
 Thy senses, thus to plead for him.
 Thou well deserv’st a halter now,
 Or to be tortured, limb by limb.
 Hence, villain ! let our parley end !
 Unhorse, thy sword and shield resign,
 If not, a dreadful death attend.
 And for this damsel, she is mine—
 I give her to my squires !” “ Not so,”
 Cries Geoffrey. “ ’Twould disgrace my name
 If to thy squires that maid should go ;
 My prowess, ere I brook the shame,
 Must withered be, this arm o’erpowered,
 Unfit to wield a soldier’s brand,
 Ere I behold the maid deflowered.”
 “ How now ? Wouldst thou with me contend ?”
 “ Yes, rather than allow thy squires
 That virgin’s spotless fame to blight.
 Enough ! let us not waste our fires
 In idle words ; if thou wilt fight,
 Go, seek thine arms, and we shall see
 What God the righteous shall areed.
 Know this, I ne’er appeased shall be
 Till thou or I succumb or bleed.”
 “ No arms, vain boy, but lance and shield
 I need, for thou appear’st so frail,
 So much a novice in the field,
 A warrior’s sword would make thee quail.
 Rather, good youth, call seven beside,
 Seven such as thou, completely armed.”
 “ Do as thou lists ! I know thy pride ;
 Fight, bravely fight, if not alarmed :
 Else, to King Arthur’s court repair,
 Who sent me hither : one of these
 Thou needs must choose ; but, sir, forbear
 Thy vain insulting menaces !”

Upon this Toki sends for his buckler and lance ; but he is so confident of overthrowing his adversary at the first blow, that he disdains putting on his coat of mail. When the squire returns with his arms, the tyrant cries in a tone of contempt—

“ Presumptuous slave, prepare to die !”
 And Geoffrey, when the taunt he heard,
 Pricked on as fast as steed could fly,
 For anger fired him at the word,

And doubly armed his valiant heart.
 Fiercer than lion or the pard,
 Tolá rushed forward with his dart,
 And dealt the youth a blow so hard,
 Nor saddle, girths, nor reins availed;
 Staggering, he fell, and kissed the ground.
 But deem not Geoffrey's courage failed;
 Unhorsed, not vanquished, with a bound
 He rose, and 'gainst his rival's shield
 Returned the blow with such a force,
 That shattered fragments strewed the field;
 Urging through plates and ribs its course,
 The lance protruded opposite,
 A full arm's length, and pinned the foe.
 The crowd, rejoicing at the sight,
 Cried "Holy Mary, what a blow!
 Tolá subdued, whose bloody sway
 Too long has caused our hearts dismay!"

Tolá, as abject after his defeat as he had been haughty and supercilious before it, implores mercy from his conqueror. His prayer is heard so far as life is concerned; but on the condition that he shall immediately repair to the court of King Arthur, like all others who yield to the valour of Geoffrey, and that he shall there confess his crimes, and acknowledge the sovereignty of the king. Tolá accedes to these conditions, only craving the assistance of a surgeon. Geoffrey consents, provided that he first restores to liberty the wounded knight and other prisoners, and that he renders back the lands and honours of which he had unjustly despoiled them. Tolá subscribes to all; the surgeon is brought, and in a few days he has recovered sufficiently to undertake the journey.

The joyous tidings of the despot's fall quickly spread through all the surrounding country. Special public rejoicings are celebrated, and Geoffrey is blessed as the deliverer of the people. But neither the success of his arms nor the honours with which he is loaded, nor the extraordinary fatigues which he has undergone, can for one moment withdraw his thoughts from Brunisent; and he feels absence to be but a new stimulus to his love. He determines, therefore, on paying a second visit to Montbrone. But there is a sacred duty to fulfil which cannot on any account be deferred or neglected: he must take home to his friend Ogier the young damsel whom he rescued from the giant. We pass over the meeting, however interesting, between the father and daughter. At this moment the seneschal whom Brunisent had despatched in search of her hero arrives at the castle of Ogier. He is overcome with joy on the discovery of Geoffrey; in the

name of Brunesent congratulates him on his victory; and after passing some days in doing honour to the hospitality of the place, he invites our young hero to accompany him to Montbrone. We need scarcely say that the invitation is cordially accepted. The lady, having received information of his approach, despatches a squadron of cavaliers to meet him, and attend him to the castle. The news of his arrival spreads like lightning, and vassals come in troops to render homage to the victorious knight.

Brunesent, with all the ladies of her court, descend to receive him at the entrance; a magnificent banquet is prepared; the chamber of honour is assigned to the conqueror; and when the castle bell has rung at the hour of midnight, he is conducted to it by the seneschal and a chosen body of warriors.

‘ On a soft couch the knight reposed ;
 The bed was carved with richest art,
 And soundly here he might have doted,
 But love assailed him with his dart.
 And he the master, what avails
 The richest chamber, softest bed ?
 When love the sleeper’s heart assails,
 It matters not where rests his head.
 Geoffrey, to amorous thoughts a prey,
 Still turned and turned in feverish state,
 Nor knew if hard or soft he lay,
 Nor felt assurance of his fate.
 Brunesent absorbs the hero’s soul ;
 Fancy recalls each word, each look,
 In his heart’s core inscribes the whole,
 And love’s the guardian of the book.
 But how discover to the fair
 His secret passion ? How disclose
 The anguish love occasioned there ?
 There is no solace to his woes
 But this : her mercy to implore.
 Thus Geoffrey passed the night in sighs,
 Pondering his project o’er and o’er,
 For sleep ne’er closed the wretch’s eyes.

Nor less severe the lady’s plight ;
 Full oft she sighs, oft vents her plaint ;
 Now love invokes to guide her right,
 Now counsel asks of God and saint.
 The night, absorbed in thoughts, she spends,
 And soon as dawning day arrives,
 Quickly attired, in haste she bends
 Towards the hall, then order gives
 To wake her ladies, and prepare
 The morning feast : the mandate given,

She and her maids to mass repair.
Her thoughts, I ween, were not on Heaven !

Geoffrey, too, bids his couch adieu,
For he had heard, and joyed to hear,
His lady's voice, which well he knew
By the sweet thrilling in his ear.
The seneschal, nor he alone
Come, on their honoured guest to wait :
The hero clad, the ablutions done,
He issues from the castle gate
To hear the mass. Brunesent is there,
And as he enters, at the sight
She pales with love : the trembling fair
Would fain advance to meet the knight ;
But lest malevolence should speak,
With much ado the wish she crushed.
Her colour came and went ; her cheek,
Now pale, now by her heart's blood flushed ;
The long black lashes of her eyes,
Pencilled by nature, not by art,
And wet with tears, awoke surprise.
Geoffrey in silence gazed ; his heart
No words could find to talk of love.
Sighs, bursting sighs, the truth betrayed !

Now from the mass the ladies move :
More than twelve hundred all arrayed
In gawds and garments well befitting,
Hie to the palace, and commence
The song and dance without remitting.
Geoffrey, refined in style and sense,
Beside Brunesent his station takes,
And never had he felt such joy
As that fair creature's presence wakes.
But joy there's none without alloy ;
Mute, posed, irresolute he sits,
Like one bewildered in his wits. . . .

Brunesent observes, well pleased the while ;
Love makes her bold, and gives her might
To speak the first : with courteous smile,
And accents sweet, she hails the knight :
" Welcome, Sir Geoffrey, to our court,
Much joy thy presence here imparts ;
Our tears henceforth are turned to sport,
And confidence elates our hearts.
Blest be thy native land, and he,
King Arthur, who despatched thee hither ;
And blest thy love, whoe'er she be !"
" Yes, lady, may all joy be with her ;

But yet in sooth no such have I."
"It cannot be that one so brave
Hath passed unmarked by beauty's eye."
"No token of such note I have,
And yet I love!" "And knows the dame
Her triumph o'er thy heart?" "By Heaven,
I know not, I've suppressed my flame;
No utterance yet my lips have given."
"Thou canst not then reproach the fair;
If obstinately thou refuse
To tell the cause of thy despair,
And diest—say whom couldst thou accuse?
Not hers the fault; 'tis thine alone;
Who succour needs, relief should claim."
"Lady, 'tis true, my fault I own;
But so transcendent is the dame,
I dare not such a boon demand;
There lives no emperor on earth
But would be honoured by her hand;
Such is her beauty, such her birth,
And so unlimited her store."
"All this is folly—want of spirit.
With love no king availeth more
Than others, if his peers in merit.
Love needs not wealth, whate'er the measure;
Worth, talents, valour, he esteems
Far more than birth, domains, and treasure.
Many of high descent he deems
Not worth a straw; rich men there be
He mocks at for their nothingness.
Keep not thy love a mystery
On fortune's score—'twere foolishness.
Thou hast such qualities, my friend,
As well deserve a lady's love,
Whate'er her rank. Good-luck attend
The maid who shall thy partner prove!"
"Lady, in Christ's name I intreat
That thou wouldst speed my humble prayer,
Without reserve, without deceit!"
"Sir Knight, by that same God I swear,
Who visited the world for man,
And bore the cross—I'll aid thy suit,
And cause it prosper if I can,
With all my heart and power to boot.
Doubt not my word." "Blest lady, no!
Thy word devoutly I believe.
Thou art the fair I covet so!
Thou only canst my pangs relieve!
My life or death on thee depends;

Thou art the fair, for ever dear,
 In whom my love begins and ends ;
 My joy, my torment, hope, and fear ;
 When to despair my heart is driven,
 Sweet thoughts of thee the gloom dispel ;
 Thou canst exalt my soul to heaven,
 Or sink it to the depths of hell !
 'Tis thou, fair lady, dost possess
 The key of all my weal and wo ;
 'Tis thou inspir'st my valiantness,
 And mak'st my courage ebb and flow !''

After a little coquetry on the part of Brunisent, and a tirade against the perversity and corruption of the age, she suggests a contract of marriage in due form, and Geoffrey replies—

“It is thy pleasure I subscribe
 A legal covenant! Agreed :
 Whate'er thy heart, thy tongue prescribe
 I instantly will sign the deed.”
 “Enough!” she cries; “henceforth thou art
 The friend and master of my heart.
 No other covenant I require
 Than this—I take thee for my wife;”
 That done, enjoy thy heart's desire;
 Of me and mine, the lord for life.
 If such thy pleasure, I implore
 That in King Arthur's royal court
 We sign and seal—I ask no more,
 For there the great and good resort.”
 “So help me God!” the knight replies;
 “Thy wish is so akin to mine—
 So sweet, so loving, and so wise,
 That day and night my heart will pine,
 Stranger to pleasure and repose,
 Till thy desire accomplished be.”
 “Then thou accord'st what I propose?”
 “Yes, my adored, most willingly.”
 “Then enter, monarch of my hall,
 My love, my titles, gold, domain,
 Deign to accept—thou'rt lord of all!”
 “Thyself, fair dame, I wish to gain,
 And not thy treasure; that resume.
 Nor deem pride dictates the reply:
 'Tis not for gold I hither come;
 Nor lands, nor titles covet I.
 I journeyed hither for thy sake;
 For I desire thee more, by Heaven,
 Than all the world! Thy lands I take
 In trust: they are not sold or given.

These will I guard, should foes assail,
Long as my sword and strength avail.”

Here ends the interest of the romance. It is easy to guess the rest. Valour is crowned by love.

Nothing can be more delicately or more happily conceived than the means employed by Bruneseñt to draw from her lover the secret of his attachment. The alternations of love, hope, and fear on both sides, and especially the lofty dignity of the lady, struggling with the passion she shrinks from avowing, yet cannot suppress, furnish materials of interest truly dramatic.

We have thought proper to introduce this valuable monument in its chronological place; but a consideration of the great body of early Spanish romance, the classes into which it may be divided, and the leading characteristics of each, cannot be done justice to until we have the whole brought fully before us in the next period.

SECOND PERIOD.

1300—1500.

Though the language of Spain was one of the earliest formed in modern Europe, and though she was, as we have seen, blessed with the light of science and the life of poetry during the darkest ages of ignorance and superstition, yet her literary progress was slow, and the productions of her genius remarkably meagre till the end of the fifteenth century.

This sameness is likewise observable in the political history of the country. During these four centuries the Spanish character was developed, strengthened, and confirmed, but seemed to receive no new impress. There was the same chivalric bravery exercised in fighting against the Moors, prompted by the same religious enthusiasm without ferocity, for there was much in the character of the foe to command esteem. There was the same high sense of honour, and the same gallant bearing, fostered by rivalry with a people honourable and gallant as themselves; and there was the same independence amongst the nobles, strengthened by the right which pertained to every vassal of making war upon the crown, provided he first restored the fiefs which he held of it.

At the commencement of the period which now comes under our review, the kingdom of Castile was distracted by the quarrels of its powerful nobles; and that of Arragon was gradually extending and strengthening its dominion. Meanwhile Granada, which was now the only Moorish state in the Peninsula, was the home of art, of luxury, and of gallantry. It had an immense population, and the land was kept in a state of high cultivation. Brilliant festivals, exciting games, and splendid tournaments, made it a scene of attraction even for Christian cavaliers. No entertainment was deemed complete unless attended with some achievement in arms; and the knights of Castile who guarded the frontiers gladly presented themselves at every courtly festival, to shed their blood in the tourney, and to dispute in serious combat the prize of valour. The civil wars of both kingdoms prevented any attempt at a general struggle between them, or any project of extensive conquest on either side; but still the battle-field was always open between the two nations, and an

opportunity was thus afforded to their chivalrous youth of exercising themselves in arms. In the year 1479, however, the whole of Christian Spain was united under one sovereignty by the marriage of Isabella of Castile with Ferdinand V. of Arragon; and its power being thus consolidated, it was natural to turn it against the Moslem foe. It has been remarked that the conquest of Granada, suggested to Isabella by her confessor, was 'a project which she pursued with the blind zeal of a woman, but with the talent and courage of a man.' The fall of this great city in 1492 ended the struggle which had lasted for nearly eight centuries between the Moslems and the Christians; and many millions of the former became subjects of Castile.

The history of Spanish poetry continues barren of names till at least the middle of the fourteenth century. Probably a great many of the popular ballads were composed at this time, but as yet no regard was paid to them by those who wished to be thought learned; and with a view to the convenience of historical arrangement, we defer, as already intimated, giving any particular account of them until the time they were allowed a place in the literature of the country. Meanwhile we glean a few interesting memorials of literary culture in the fourteenth century.

ALPHONSO XI.

1312—1350.

The example of Alphonso X. no doubt operated powerfully on the grandees of Castile; and to its influence must we in a great measure ascribe the encouragement given by Alphonso XI. to literature and science. Amid the turmoils of a busy reign, this prince maintained the character of a protector of learning, and distinguished himself as a writer in his native language. He is said to have composed a general chronicle in redondillas, but it has not yet been discovered in the archives of literature. However slight may have been the poetic merits of this work, it is rendered interesting by the fact, that the king abandoned the Alexandrine measure of the monks, and chose the easy-flowing verse of the popular ballads for the rhythmical structure of his narrative. His example gave sanction to the redondilla, and brought it into favour. Several books in Castilian prose also were written by his order, among which was a kind of peerage or register of the nobility of Castile, with a record of their hereditary estates. There was also a sporting calendar, in the composition of which several persons assisted. If these books contained

nothing by which rhetorical art might be advanced, they at least contributed to give importance to the national dialect, and to stimulate persons of rank to engage in literary pursuits.

DON JUAN MANUEL.

1235—1347.

Don Juan Manuel was a Castilian prince, descended from Ferdinand III. in a line collateral with the reigning family of Castile, and one of the most accomplished men of his age. He was one of the five guardians of Alphonso XI. during his minority; and he afterwards served him with chivalrous fidelity, though it appears he was a prince whom it was exceedingly difficult to please. He was appointed governor of the frontiers, and for twenty years carried on a successful war against the Moors of Granada—an early example of that union of letters and arms which afterwards reflected so much glory on the Spanish nation. Juan Manuel's principal work, 'El Conde Lucanor,' is the most valuable monument of Spanish literature in the fourteenth century; and if we except the royal statutes and chronicles which have been noticed, it is the earliest prose work in the Castilian language, as was 'The Decameron,' which appeared about the same time, the first in the Italian. Both are a collection of tales; but 'The Decameron' is the lively offspring of a man of dissipated manners, seeking to amuse rather than to instruct; while 'Count Lucanor' is the production of a statesman instructing a grave and serious nation in lessons of policy and morality in the form of apologues. Though containing much that is the genuine offspring of the author, yet the groundwork of the book is evidently the 'Disciplina Clericalis' of Rabbi Moses Sephardi, the converted Jew of Huesca before noticed, who flourished at the end of the twelfth century, and translated most of his stories and sentences from the fables of the East.

'Count Lucanor' is a book so unostentatious in its character, so full of sound practical good sense, and clothed in such simple, homely, but spirited language, as could scarcely have been expected from Spain at this era. At the time it appeared, a taste for the romantic fictions of chivalry had begun to prevail; yet there is in the 'Count Lucanor' no trace of extravagance, no dreamy flights of a wild imagination. In every page of the book the author shows himself a wise man of the world, and a close observer of human nature. He places his hero, Count Lucanor, in various *circumstances of difficulty* both with respect to morals and politics.

The count asks advice of his minister Patronio, who answers him with a story or fable, related with much simplicity and gracefulness, and applied with wit and ingenuity. There are forty-nine of these tales, and the moral of each is contained in one or more verses at the end, more remarkable for precision and good sense than for poetical merit. The following is a translation of the first of these apologues:—

“One day Count Lucanor thus addressed his counsellor Patronio:—
“Patronio, thou knowest that I am a great hunter, and that I have invented considerable improvements for the hoods and jesses of my falcons. Now those who are evil-inclined towards me, make this a matter of derision. They extol the Cid, Ruy Diaz, and Count Ferando Gonzales for their valour in battle, and the holy and blessed King Ferdinand for the victories he won; but me they praise with a sneer for having brought to perfection the hoods and jesses. Now as such commendation is more an insult than an honour, I pray thee counsel me how I shall escape from this irony on a subject which, after all, is praiseworthy in its place.” “My Lord Count,” said Patronio, “I will relate to you what befell a Moorish king of Cordova.” The count bade him proceed, and Patronio spoke as follows:—

“There was a Moorish king of Cordova, whose name was Al-Hakem. He governed his kingdom with some wisdom, but did not exert himself to accomplish any brilliant achievement, as kings are in duty bound to do, for it is not enough that they merely preserve their dominions. Those who would acquire glory and fame, should endeavour to enlarge their territories, if it can be done without injustice; and thus they will not only gain applause while they live, but leave behind them monuments of their greatness. This king, however, cared not for glory or advantage, but thought only of eating and drinking, and amusing himself in his palace. Now it happened one day that he was listening to the music of an instrument called *al-bogón*, of which the Moors are very fond. He observed that it did not sound so well as it might; so he took the *al-bogón* and made a hole underneath, opposite the others, after which it yielded a much finer note. This was a very clever invention, but not exactly suitable for a king. It passed into a proverb; and when the people would speak of any trifling improvement, they said, ‘It is even worthy of King Al-Hakem.’ This saying was so often repeated, that at length it reached the ears of the king, who demanded to know its meaning, and so insisted on an answer, that they were obliged to explain it to him. When he heard it he was sorely grieved, for he was in truth a very good king. He forbore to punish those who had thus spoken of him, but he made a resolution in his own heart so to act that it should be repeated no more. He set his people to finish the great mosque of Cordova. He supplied every want, and finally completed it, making it the most beautiful, noble, and exquisite of all the Moorish mosques in Spain. God be

and is called St Mary's, having been built by King Ferdinand, after he took Cordova. When the king had finished it, he said that if his subjects had hitherto exposed him to derision, in the future he should be applauded for that on which he had expended so much. The proverb was in fact changed, and when the Moors speak of an addition superior to which is attached, they say, "King Al-Hakem has

well performed a trifling deed,
and shouldst enlarge thine actions' scale,
acts will perish, but the meed
for great exploits will never fail.*

On that Patronio took little pains to disguise his in-
We subjoin a few of his concluding morals, which
verse, of the same measure as that in the note:—

'He who would counsel thee thy friends to fly,
Seeks to deceive thee with no witness by.'

'Never risk thy means, be sure,
When counselled by a wretch that's poor.'

'A stripling's follies don't severely school,
But laugh him into sense with ridicule.'

'Do good, and don't protract it,
Lest beggars should expect it.'

We may remark, in passing, that the 'Count Lucanor' has suggested more than one subject for the Spanish stage, and contains also the groundwork of 'The Taming of the Shrew' by our own immortal Shakspeare.

Don Juan Manuel was likewise the author of a 'Chronicle of Spain,' 'The Book of the Sages,' 'The Book of Chivalry,' and several others—in all said to amount to twelve. It appears that most of these are now lost, though they existed in manuscript in the sixteenth century. A collection of his poems was also extant at that time, according to Argote de Molina, who published the 'Count Lucanor,' and intended likewise to edit the poems. All his works were bequeathed to the Dominican convent which he had founded and endowed, and in which he was interred. But the 'Count Lucanor' alone was published—first in Seville by Argote de Molina in 1575, and again in Madrid in 1642.

* *Si algun bien fizieres, que chico asaz fuere,
Fazlo granado: quel bien nunca muere.*

re are some of his romances preserved in the 'Cancionero eral,' written with a simplicity which adds to the value of positions in themselves tender and touching. The following be inserted as a specimen :—

Gritando va el Caballero.

All alone the knight is wandering,
 Crying with a heavy tone;
 Clad in dark funereal garments,
 Lined with serge—he walks alone—
 To the dreary, trackless mountains,
 He retires to weep and mourn.
 Barefoot, lonely, and deserted,
 Swearing never to return,
 Where the voice of lovely woman
 Might betray him to forget
 Her whose ever-blessed memory
 Lives within his heart-shrine yet—
 Her who, promised to his passion,
 Ere he had possessed her, died!
 Now he seeks some desert country,
 There in darkness to abide.
 In a distant, gloomy mountain,
 Where no human beings dwell,
 There he built a house of sadness,
 Sadder than the thoughts can tell.
 Of a yellow wood he built it,
 Of a wood that's called despair;
 Black the stone that formed the dwelling,
 Black the blending mortar there.
 Roof he raised of gloomy tilings,
 O'er the beams of ebony;
 Sheets of lead he made his flooring,
 Heavy as his misery.
 Leaden were the doors he sculptured—
 His own chisel carved the door,
 His own weary fingers scattered
 Faded vine-leaves on the floor.
 He who makes his home with sorrow,
 Should not fly to joy's relief.
 Here in this dark dolorous mansion,
 Dwelt he—votary of grief.
 Discipline is his, severer
 Than the months of stern Paulár;
 And his bed was made of tendrils,
 And his food those tendrils are;
 And his drink is tears of sorrow,
 Which soon turned to tears again.

Once a day he ate, once only,
 Sooner to be freed from pain.
 Like the wood the walls he painted,
 Like that dark and yellow wood;
 There a cloth of silk suspended,
 White as snow in solitude;
 And an alabaster altar
 Even before that emblem stood—
 There a taper of bitumen
 O'er the altar faintly moved;
 And the image of his lady—
 Of the lady that he loved—
 There he placed: her form of silver,
 And her cheeks of crystal clear,
 Clad in robes of silvery damask,
 Such as richest maidens wear;
 Next a snow-white convent garment,
 And a veil of purest white,
 Covered o'er with moons, whose brightness
 Shed a chaste and gentle light;
 On her head a royal coronet,
 Such as honoured monarchs see—
 'Twas adorned with chestnut branches
 Gathered from the chestnut-tree.
 Mark! beneath that word mysterious
 Hidden sense may chance to be—
 Chestnut branches may betoken,
 May betoken chastity.*
 Two-and-twenty years the maiden
 Lived, and died so fair, so young—
 Tell me how such youth and beauty
 Should in fitting words be sung!
 Tell me how to sing his sorrow,
 Who thus mourned his perished maid?
 There he lived in wo and silence,
 With her image and her shade.
 Pleasure from his house he banished,
 While he welcomed pain and wo;
 They shall dwell with him forever,
 They from him shall never go.†

* *Castañas*, from *casta*, *chaste*.

† *Cancionero de Valencia*, 1511: p. 135.

RABBI SANTO DE CARRION.

1291—1350.

The 'Dance of Death' was a favourite fiction both of painters and poets in the middle ages. It appeared in different countries, under a vast variety of forms, but in none more striking and picturesque than in the Spanish version by Rabbi Santo de Carrion. It is a kind of spiritual masquerade, in which persons of all rank and age appear dancing with the skeleton form of Death. The first seven stanzas of the Spanish poem form a prophecy, in which the King of Terrors issues his summons, partly in his own person, and partly in that of a preaching friar:—

'Lo ! I am Death, with aim as sure as steady,
Each living thing that is and shall be I draw near me—
I call thee—I require thee, man! be ready!
Why build ye up this fragile life? now, hear me,
Where is the power that does not own me—fear me?
Who can escape me when I bend my bow?
I pull the string—thou liest in dust below,
Smit by the barb my ministering angels bear me.

* * * * *

Come to the dance of Death—come hither, even
The last, the lowliest—of all rank and station;
Who will not come shall be by scourges driven—
I hold no parley with disinclination!
List to yon friar who preaches of salvation,
And hie ye to your penitential post;
For who delays, who lingers, he is lost,
And handed o'er to hopeless reprobation.'

Death is afterwards represented, as in the old pictures and poems, summoning all ranks, from the pope downward, through cardinals, patriarchs, kings, bishops, lords, monks, &c. down to labourers, and forcing all to join his mortal dance, though many complain bitterly of the grievance. Here is a spirited stanza:—

'I to my dance—my mortal dance—have brought
Two nymphs, all bright in beauty and in bloom.
They listened, fear-struck, to my songs, methought,
And truly songs like mine are tinged with gloom;
But neither roseate hues nor flowers' perfume
Will now avail them—nor the thousand charms

Of worldly vanity will fill my arms—
They are my brides—their bridal-bed the tomb.*

And thus the poem concludes :—

'And since 'tis certain, then, that we must die,
No hope, no chance, no prospect of redress,
Be it our constant aim unswervingly
To tread the narrow path of holiness;
For God is first, last, midst; oh let us press
Onwards! and when Death's monitory glance
Shall summon us to join his mortal dance,
Even then shall hope and joy our footsteps bless.'

Another spirited poem, written in the same measure, and attributed to Santo de Carrion, is the narration of a vision seen by a holy hermit at prayer. A putrefied corpse is introduced with worms devouring it, and behind, something in the form of a white bird, which represents the disembodied soul; the latter hurls the most dreadful curses at the decaying body, which are again retorted, each accusing the other of having caused its eternal damnation.*

DON JUAN RUIZ, ARCH-PRIEST OF HITA.

1292 (?)—1351.

Don Juan Ruiz, arch-priest of Hita, was contemporary with Don Juan Manuel, and seems to have been a native of Alcalá de

* Since the above was written, Mr Ticknor† has brought to light a singular poem on Joseph, based, not on the Mosaic record, but on that of the Koran, and written in the Arabic character, though in the Spanish language, whence it is supposed to have been the work of a Moor who, living among the Spaniards, had adopted their dialect. An incident added to the narrative, and illustrative of the general tone of the poem, is introduced as having occurred on the first night after the outrage committed by the brethren. Joseph, while travelling in charge of a negro, passes the spot where his mother lies buried :—

* And when the negro heeded not | that guarded him behind,
From off the camel Joseph sprang | on which he rode confined,
And hastened with all speed | his mother's grave to find,
Where he knelt, and pardon sought, | to relieve his troubled mind.

He cried, " God's grace be with thee still, | oh lady, mother dear!
Oh mother you would sorrow | if you looked upon me here;
For my neck is bound with chains, | and I live in grief and fear,
Like a traitor by my brothers sold, | like a captive to the spear.

They have sold, they have sold me, | though I never did them harm:
They have torn me from my father, | from his strong and living arm—
By art and cunning they enticed me, | and by falsehood's guilty charm,
And I go a base-bought captive | full of sorrow and alarm."

† 'History of Spanish Literature,' vol. i. p. 90.

Henares. He was imprisoned by the command of Cardinal Gil Albornoz, the celebrated archbishop of Toledo, most likely for some of the numerous indiscretions mentioned in his poems, which are certainly little in accordance with the sacred obligations of his office. He does not inform us what were the accusations laid against him, but he asserts his innocence, and implores the Holy Virgin to turn against his accusers the slanderous weapons they had used. He throws the blame of his irregularities on the stars, saying that he was born under the influence of Venus, and was but the child of destiny—a sorry apology, and one which, if ever seriously preferred, was never seriously admitted by the judges of error or the awarders of punishment.

Before the time of Ruiz, Castilian poetry displayed little variety of versification; but he introduced several new and harmonious measures. Not only did he thus exhibit with effect the flexibility of the Castilian language, but he introduced and maintained the poetic spirit throughout his works. This, though sometimes appearing in former writers, yet so often sleeps through long and weary pages, that it is impossible to master their works except with a view to some object of historical or critical research. They seldom command our sympathy, or awaken our interest; and that curiosity must be eager indeed which will toil through the heavy labours of those versifiers who aspire after no lofty sentiment, and consider the form of verse sufficient ornament for their pages. A rhymster and a poet were synonymous terms in their vocabulary, as they usually are in all rude ages. But our poet had a higher ambition. His gay and sprightly imagination played alike with the weapons of irony and wit; he jested and moralised in turn; wandered from the house of mourning to the house of feasting; and hesitated not to avail himself of the low jest or vulgar proverb on the one hand, or the sublime and sententious eloquence of holy writ on the other. In short, the arch-priest is a very ardent and amorous gentleman—rather too gross occasionally for a divine—and a great admirer of Ovid; but with many redeeming virtues, and a constantly-returning sense of shame and duty. Saints and sages have alike furnished him with subjects; and his works contain a number of ingenious fictions, apposite illustrations, and moral deductions. The picture he gives of the clergy of his day is as correct as it is disgraceful:—

‘ Oh father friar! who can tell
How much thou dost torment us here?
Would I could in thy convent dwell,
For thou art never there!’

The works of Juan Ruiz consist of a series of stories that

appear to be sketches from his own personal history, mingled occasionally with fictions which perhaps may be only allegorical representations of other facts. The most curious is the battle of Mr Carnival with Mrs Lent, the idea appearing to be taken from the 'Batracho-myo-machia:' such conflicts were highly popular with the metre-mongers of the middle ages. Don Tocino (Mr Bacon), Doña Cecina (Mrs Hung-Beef), with a train of other savoury personages, are marshalled in mortal combat, but in vain; the holy cause of Mrs Lent triumphs, and Mr Carnival is condemned to be imprisoned in solitude upon one spare meal per diem, except in case of illness or repentance. But at the end of forty days the allegorical prisoner escapes, raises new levies of followers, defeats his foes, and appears in state as the ally of Don Amor.

The work on which Ruiz has chiefly drawn is a Latin drama on Love by Pamphylus Maurilianus; and he does not conceal the obligation:—

‘And if I have indeed been gross,
Unfurl your kind forgiveness o’er me;
For Pamphylus and Ovid told
Whatever’s most impure before me.’

The following are fair specimens of his moral sentences:—

‘This is man’s duty, this is wisdom’s test,
To know both good and ill, and choose the best.’

‘Deserve your recompense, exact it not;
Safety and freedom ne’er with gold were bought.’

‘Judgment and wisdom crown the hoary head;
Knowledge and science in time’s footsteps tread.’

‘The wise man murmurs not, when murmuring
Nor consolation nor repose can bring:
That which our complaints remove not nor repair,
In prudent silence let us learn to bear.’

‘Take heed to trifles; words are dangerous things;
From a small corn the proudest oak-tree springs;
The mass ferments with one small grain of leaven;
Thorns spring from down driven by the winds of heaven.’

Juan Ruiz has written several hymns to the Virgin. The following may be taken as a specimen of their spirit and style:—

‘Thou flower of flowers! I’ll follow thee,
And sing thy praise unweariedly;

Best of the best! oh may I ne'er
From thy pure service flee.

Lady! to thee I turn my eyes,
On thee my trusting hope relies;
Oh let thy spirit smiling here
Chase my anxieties!

Most holy Virgin! tired and faint
I pour my melancholy plaint,
Yet lift a tremulous thought to thee,
Even 'midst mortal taint.

Thou ocean star! thou port of joy!
From pain, and sadness, and annoy,
Oh rescue me, oh comfort me,
Bright lady of the sky!

Thy mercy's an exhaustless mine,
Freedom from care and life are thine;
He reck's not, fears not, faints not, who
Trusts in thy power divine.

I am the slave of wo and wrong,
Despair and darkness guide my song;
Do thou avail me, Virgin, thou
Waft my frail bark along!

Influence of Love.

'Love, to the slowest, subtilty can teach,
And to the dumb give fair and flowing speech;
It makes the coward daring, and the dull
And idle diligent, and promptness full.

It makes youth ever youthful, takes from age
The heavy burthen of time's pilgrimage;
Gives beauty to deformity—is seen
To value what is valueless and mean.

Enamoured once, however low and rude,
Each seems to each all wise, all fair, all good,
Brightest of nature's works, and loveliest,
Desire, ambition, covet not the rest.

Love spreads its misty veil o'er all, and when
One sun is fled, another dawns again;
But valour may 'gainst adverse fate contend,
The hardest fruit is ripened in the end.

The poetic powers of the arch-priest of Hita are perhaps best displayed in his verses on Death, which are too numerous for quotation. The following is a single couplet:—

‘Thou art abandoned now, proud man, by all
But the hoarse raven croaking o’er thy pall.’

DON PEDRO LOPEZ DE AYALA.

1332—1407.

Lopez de Ayala was born in Murcia in 1332, and died at Calahorra* in 1407. He served four successive kings in the capacity of grand-chancellor of Castile. Being a descendant of the most noble House of Haro in the paternal line, he was Lord of Salvatierra de Alava. He was both a poet and a historian; and the Spanish nation still lies under the disgrace of not having published his poems, which were long since promised to the world by Sanchez. We are therefore obliged to be content with the extracts published by Gomez at Madrid in 1829, and by Amador de los Rios in 1847. To the philosophical politician the works of Ayala must possess considerable interest, at least such interest as results from the display of strong political passions, and from the development of a character that would seem to prognosticate a stormy and troubled life. He remained many years in the service of Peter the Cruel, the sport of all that monster’s caprices; but, wearied at length of his tyranny, he attached himself to the party of Don Henry of Trastamara. This course he not only justified with his pen, but followed with his sword when the two illegitimate brothers of the king put themselves at the head of the malcontents, and declared war against him on account of the murder of their mother, Elinor de Guzman. The insurgents were defeated at the battle of Najera, and Ayala was made prisoner by the English, who were in alliance with Peter the Cruel. He was taken to England on the 3d of April 1367, where it is said he composed his ‘*Rimado de Palacio*’ in prison. This, which seems to be the most remarkable of his poems, contains 1619 coplas or stanzas, varying both in the number and measure of the lines. It was written expressly with a view to render Peter odious to his oppressed subjects, and to attach them to the interests of Prince Henry. The poet has drawn a fearful picture of the gloomy prison in which he was confined, the wounds from which he was suffering, and the

* *Calahorra*, anciently *Calagurris*, was the birthplace of Quintilian. It is still remarkable for the ruins which attest its ancient splendour.

chains with which he was loaded. Politics, morals, religion, are the themes of Ayala's muse; and Sanchez assures us that his works are replete with profound learning, extensive knowledge of the world, and elevated religious feeling. His satires on the clergy and statesmen of his own day are sufficiently severe; but the bitterness of his censures had too good foundation in the corruption of both classes during the fourteenth century. After his release, Lopez de Ayala became one of the counsellors of Henry II., and received a commission as his ambassador to France; but in a battle fought against the Portuguese at Aljubarrota (1385), he was again made prisoner. This second captivity affected him with a truly painful sense of the miseries arising from the loss of personal liberty, and tintured his poetry with a melancholy and solemnity which impart to it a character of more than usual elevation. At the period when Ayala wrote, the other poets of Europe composed little else than amatory verses; but in his numerous productions there is scarcely a line to be found which alludes to an earthly passion. Many of them, however, are replete with love to the Supreme Being borrowing the language of human affection, and proving that the author was in religion what we usually term a mystic.

We select a passage or two from that part of the '*Rimado*,' where, after giving advice to princes, ministers, and clergy, for the proper government of the people committed to their charge, the author takes a survey of the other classes of society, exposes the low state of their morality, and lays down practical rules for their conduct, corroborating them by testimonies drawn from the Bible and the classics:—

Merchants.

'Then of our merchants what opinion give?
By lying, cheating, perjury, they live.
God and their souls they in oblivion cast,
Nor once reflect they must account at last.
Their merchandise with rank imposture teems,
False entries, symbols false, naught what it seems.
Fifty pistoles for such a piece they ask,
And if the imposition thou unmask,
"Take it," they cry, "for thirty! yet, good friend,
May we ne'er witness this same twelvemonth end,
If yesterday we gave not for the gear
Forty pistoles; 'twas to a foreigner!"
Then, in their weights and measures, what deceit!
They prate of one, but with another mete.
Such are our merchants: yet no fault they own;
Time out of mind the traffic hath been known!

Scholars.

'Dost thou inquire how learned doctors pass?
 Much lore they have, but more defects, alas!
 Gold is the god they worship, and for this,
 Conscience without compunction they dismiss.
 Needst thou their counsel on some dubious plea?
 Bending their eyes with due solemnity:
 "Faith," they exclaim, "it is a puzzling question,
 Much time it will demand, and long reflection.
 Yet to oblige you, desperate though it looks,
 We may be useful; we'll consult our books.
 But mark—for this all others we must leave;
 It will absorb us quite from morn till eve."

Hymn to the Holy Virgin.

'Resplendent queen of stars, whose rays benign
 Comfort the world, on me vouchsafe to shine,
 On me, thy servant, who confide in thee!
 Wise Solomon compared thy majesty
 To the tall cedar on Mount Lebanon;
 Thy figure to the cypress on Mount Sion;
 Thy freshness to the palm-tree ever green;
 And Scripture, to the olive, oh my queen. . . .

Thou hast redeemed the curse by Eve entailed,
 And remedied the ills her seed bewailed.
 Thy chapel stands on a steep mountain's crest,
 Where frequent miracles thy power attest;
 And there I pledged to thee a votive lay,
 Which from my cell I now devoutly pay.

Lady, with heart sincere,
 And true humility,
 At Monserrat I swear
 To offer thanks to thee.

There, shouldst thou deign my fetters to remove,
 My gratitude in serving thee I'll prove;
 There, where thy sacred image first I saw,
 That filled my soul with confidence and awe!

The plan of the 'Rimado de Palacio' is not original. The author seems to have had before his mind the prayer of the troubadour Riquier, addressed to Alphonso X., in which he passes in review the professions, vocations, and wicked practices of men; and the *didactic part* of the work seems to be entirely drawn from the *Scriptures*, and the 'Count Lucanor.' For the severity of the

satire, however, and the piquancy of the sarcasms; for the elevation of sentiment, and the practical good-sense of the precepts; for the correctness, perspicuity, and elegance of the style, he is far superior to either Riquier or Manuel.

The editors of Ayala's works have given us some curious particulars of his habits. Each time that he resumed his pen, he first confessed his sins three times; then recited the decalogue; next the seven mortal sins; then the seven works of charity; and last, the five moral sentences of the Christian philosopher.

Being strongly attached to the study of history and philosophy, he translated some ancient works, among which were 'Livy's Roman History,' 'The Fall of Princes,' 'The Ethics of Saint Gregory,' 'Isidorus on the Summum Bonum,' 'Boethius on the Consolation of Philosophy,' and 'The History of Troy.' He wrote also, besides the 'Rimado de Palacio,' already mentioned, a chronicle of the four kings in whose reigns he lived, and a book on Falconry. The following letter is from the chronicle of Don Pedro the Cruel of Castile, and is dated 1369:—

The Moorish King of Granada to King Don Pedro of Castile.

'Exalted king and lord, whom may God honour and guard: Amen. Thy servant Benhattin, the little philosopher, and of the council of the king of Granada, thy friend, with all respect and humility. Powerful and renowned king among other kings, I acknowledge that my service ought always to be ready for the honour and advancement of thy state and royal dignity, in so far as my knowledge may attain and my power be able to support it. . . .

'When the King Don Alphonso, thy father, was alive, and even after his death, even some time since thou beganest to reign, all those under thy dominion lived in the fullest security and enjoyment, on account of the many good customs which thy father instituted; and this pleasure continued to them since his death during the time of thy dominion—which pleasure they esteemed so much, that they well might say that neither the sweetness of the honeycomb nor any other pleasure should be compared unto it. But of these pleasures all thy subjects have since been deprived, and thou art the cause of it by the numerous cruelties, and breaches of the law, and acts of injustice, which thou hast committed and art committing every day; doing among the people many cruelties of bloodshed, and murder, and other crimes which tongue cannot utter. . . .

'Oh king, know that so palpable is thy inordinate covetousness which thou art exercising, that all those who have had intercourse of any kind with thee assert that thou art the most notorious, covetous, and disorderly king that has ever been in Castile or in any other realm. Wherefore so open, and so manifest, and so egregious is the covetousness that thou exempliftest, in the extortions to increase thy

treasures, which cannot be sufficiently supplied by the regular resources, but still, adding evil to evil, thou robbest every one; and the furniture of the churches, and sacred articles used in the celebration of the mass, thou appropriatest to increase thy treasures. But neither conscience nor shame affects thee; and so great is the stimulus thou findest in thy accursed covetousness, that thou makest new fortifications both of castles and fortresses, in order that thou mayest secure these treasures, for thou art not able to secure them in any one in the world, but art continually fleeing from one stronghold to another with them, because separation from them is death to thee.

'The plumes with which kings ennoble themselves, and preserve and defend their lands and states, are the great men among the nobility, and those of high lineage among their countrymen; for which reason these are compared to and called wings, as by them kings proceed from one land to another, and from among them choose their counsellors. And with the plumes which are formed in such wings, do kings ennoble themselves, increase in pride and splendour, and overcome their opponents; and with these wings kings can make very easy flights when their countrymen and subjects are paid by them. . . . But what is manifest of thee is, that the full-grown feathers, and the six chief feathers of each wing, which thou formerly hadst in thy wings, are fallen from thee: all thy most noble and most powerful adherents, who were the plumes of thy flight hitherto, have forgot the friendship they used to exercise, and the aid they used to afford; and thy sovereignty which they obeyed, they have now exchanged for that of thy enemy. . . . Those under thy domination wish not to yield to thy tyranny, and they resist thee so far as they can, for thou at all times seekest to be more feared, even by thy courtiers, than to be loved and praised.'

ANCIENT ROMANTIC LITERATURE.

Vasco Lobeira, a Portuguese, who died in 1403, is confessedly the author of the '*Amadis de Gaula*,' the most celebrated of all the romances of chivalry. The first four books were written in Spanish, and the work seems to have become generally known towards the end of the fourteenth century, which was just the time when the poetic genius of the nation was rising into youthful vigour. Whether it originally belonged to this country or not, it soon became naturalised by the avidity with which it was read, and the powerful influence it exerted over the taste of the Castilians. Its monstrous perversions of history and geography escaped the *attention of readers* who had little acquaintance with these

branches of knowledge; and neither the formality of the style nor the prolixity of the narrative was reckoned a blemish; they were thought rather to bring out more strongly the virtues of Gothic chivalry which the Moorish wars maintained in the Peninsula. The brilliant fairy mythology of Arabia added a powerful charm, and gave to the 'Amadis' an epic colouring, which, joined to its marvellous descriptions of romantic heroism, produced an effect on the feelings and imagination of the age beyond anything that had yet appeared. Its highly moral character was strangely blended with a peculiar kind of delicately veiled license, which seems to have accorded very well with the spirit of Spanish chivalry. So fascinating a picture of the loftiest heroism and the most unshaken fidelity—circumscribing, with no anxious care, the boundary of love's dominion, yet admitting no offensively indecorous or immoral trait—displaying flights of imagination often exalted beyond nature, but redeeming them with a simplicity of description that must please even a cultivated taste—such a work well deserved, at the time of its appearance, that popular favour which it continued for ages to enjoy. Cervantes himself was not insensible to its merits; and when, in the expurgation of Don Quixote's library, all the other books of chivalry are burnt, he makes the curate spare this as the best specimen of a singular class of productions.

Amadis is the illegitimate son of the king of Gaula (supposed to be part of Wales), and is exposed on the sea by his mother, to conceal her shame. Here he is found by a Scottish knight; and when about twelve years of age, but in size and appearance fifteen, he is appointed page to Oriana, the daughter of the king of England. She was about ten years old, and so fair, that she was called 'the peerless.'

'As soon as Oriana, the daughter of King Lisuarte, came to Scotland, the queen gave to her the "Child of the Sea," saying, "This is a child who shall serve you;" and she said that it pleased her. And the Child of the Sea kept this word in his heart, so that it never afterwards left it; and as this history truly shows, he was never, while he lived, weary of her service. And this their love lasted as long as their lives; but the Child of the Sea, not knowing that she loved him, thought himself very bold, considering her greatness and her beauty, that he should set his heart on her, and never dared to speak to her concerning it. And she, though she loved him in her heart, took heed not to speak more with him than with another, but her eyes took great delight in showing to her heart that which she most loved in the world.

'Thus lived they silently together, neither saying ought to the other about their feelings. Then at last the time came when the *Child of the Sea* considered within himself that he might take arms,

if he could find any that would make him a knight. And this he desired that he might either perish in deeds of valour, or gain by them his lady's favour.'

The narrative goes on to relate how he besought the king to confer knighthood upon him, and was warned that it was better for a knight to die than to live, if he should fail to sustain the many trials by which his courage and patience must be proved. But the Child of the Sea said to him, 'Neither for all this will I fail to be a knight; for my heart would not have set itself upon it, if I had not already thought to fulfil all that you have said.'

Thus begins the knightly career of Amadis; and the book is filled up with his after-adventures and those of his brother Galaor, who was born of the same parents after their marriage. They wander into France, Germany, Turkey; sometimes we find them in unknown regions in the midst of enchantments; sometimes under the smiles of their ladies, sometimes under their frowns; encountering knights as well as magicians, giants, and other imaginary beings, till all ends at last in the marriage of Amadis and Oriana. Throughout the story Amadis appears as the model of all chivalrous virtue; and in the passages which describe the duties of knighthood there is sometimes a lofty tone that rises to eloquence.

The 'Amadis' touched the right spring in the Castilian bosom, and its popularity was great and immediate. Edition succeeded edition; and, what was worse, a swarm of other knights-errant soon filled the literary world, claiming kindred with the 'Amadis,' though bearing little resemblance to their prototype, except in their extravagance.

The state of manners in Spain which produced this extraordinary series of romances, had already been fertile in heroes with the same general qualities; and now the popular romance poetry, which had long existed in obscurity, began to attract attention. Ballads and songs, hitherto little regarded, were carefully noted and collected; new life was infused into this species of composition by the consideration in which it was held; the Teutonic and romantic style prevailed over the classic; and the battle was fairly won by the democracy against the aristocracy of letters. The learned elaborations of monks and princes were left to be food for bookworms; and romances instinct with chivalrous life were the order of the day. This is a suitable time, therefore, to introduce them more fully to the reader.

It is impossible that the earlier ballads, which are the finest as well as the simplest, should have come down to us in the form *which first gained currency among the people*. They were long *subject to all the mutations incident to unwritten compositions*:

they were taught by mothers to their children; they were sung by soldiers on the march; by the rustics at their daily toil; and by women during their domestic occupations; while some who had a large collection, made it their profession to recite them, or sing them to the guitar, for the entertainment of delighted listeners. One added to the tale he had received; another, either through design or lapse of memory, omitted or altered a part, so that there were often many versions of the same poem. Whoever was master of those that commanded the highest popularity, considered his knowledge as a source of profit and renown, which it was his interest to monopolise as much as possible. But the celebrity which certain compositions enjoyed, led sooner or later to their becoming generally known, and occupying the position which we should now characterise by denominating them 'standard versions.'

Amid all the mutations of form to which the ancient romances were subject, the same spirit and general character was uniformly preserved. There was an elevation of thought sometimes rising into the sublime, and always breathing the purest patriotism, the strongest attachment to civil liberty, and the most profound respect for all that was noble in sentiment and generous in affection. And though many of them are fictitious in the usual sense of the word, they are strictly truthful in the picture they exhibit of the manners and customs of the age to which they belong. The style is simple, natural, and generally very concise in the mode of expression. The ancient popular poets of Spain scorned prolix introductions and tedious expositions; they put the narrative, as it were, into dramatic action, and dropped the curtain as soon as the dénouement appeared. The perfection of this art is attainable only among a people who hear poetry rather than read it, and among whom the recitation is aided by gesture and music. What may be termed beauty of diction was an excellence unknown to these bards: they deemed all merit to reside in simplicity of narration, plainness of expression, and the rapidity with which the facts succeeded each other. The versification of all the ancient romances is pretty nearly the same, and has already been described among the prevailing forms of Castilian verse.

With respect to their subjects, the most obvious division is into the *chivalric*, which celebrate the feats of knightly valour, loyalty, and love; the *historical*, derived from accredited facts in the annals of the country; the *Moorish*, of which the subjects are taken from persons and events belonging to the Moslems of Spain; and finally, the *miscellaneous*—that is to say, the romances which cannot be referred to any of these heads, and in which the prevailing character is the jocose, the amorous,

the sacred, the mythological, the burlesque, may be added those which have chosen manners and habits of the gipsies, a race indigenous in the Peninsula. We need scarcely mention the historical, and the Moorish, are the period now under review; while the mentioned here, belong almost exclusively

to the poetic romances are taken from the past, and are among the oldest of the Spanish literature, the form and language in which they have been preserved. The Spaniards having, from very remote times, been distinguished by a love of knighthood among them, and being kept in continual struggle with the Moslem foe, their country has been more than any other in Europe, a theatre of adventures; and the Spaniard, if he could boast no chivalrous deeds of his own, would hear the recital of those of his countrymen. The poet was to feed this passion; and he was never satisfied unless the incidents related were real or fictitious, nor was he required to observe the boundaries of the possible or the probable. It was enough that he expressed the true sentiments of his heart, and that his tale was calculated to move the feelings of those who listened; for in poetry, as in religion, the Spaniards held that the surest way to feel deeply was to believe without question. By the continual framing of pleasing fictions, the poet kept both himself and his admirers in an ideal world, of heroic knights and enamoured princesses; of proud castles, strong towers; of lovers in prison, and ladies in disguise. As the demand increasing with the supply, poetry crossed the boundaries to seek new materials for chivalrous adventures; for in those times also knighthood had performed prodigies, and imagination could multiply them at pleasure.

The authors paid little attention to the execution of these productions. When they found a really poetic story, they seized the subject, and brought it out with feeling and fidelity to nature, without any elaborate joining of the parts or arranging of the machinery; the imagination was allowed full play in bestowing colouring and effect on the situations; and everything, therefore, depended on the inspiration of the moment, and little or nothing on critical knowledge or acquired skill.

These compositions have obtained but brief notice from native writers on Spanish literature, as if they feared to lower its dignity by giving prominence to the homely effusions of their unlettered ancestors. A better reason may be, that it 'would be as superfluous to recount their easily recognised defects, as it would be impossible

any critical study to imitate one of their beauties.* They have also, however, attracted the admiration of several German writers of eminence; and some of the most elegant scholars of the peninsula, as well as several of our own poets,* have had the courage to appreciate their merits. The united and well-directed efforts of these men have prepared the way for doing justice to the old romances of Spain, which are allowed to possess more feeling and invention than any other poetry of similar antiquity. The following romance will probably recall to our recollection some of our own common ballads, in which may be found the same natural and simple sentiments, together with the same improbability of situation:—

Count Alarcos and the Infanta Solisa.

* *Retraida está la Infanta.*

‘ Now the Infanta is retired,
 She is retired as wont to be ;
 She was sad and discontented,
 For her life passed gloomily ;
 All the prime of life is fading—
 Swift the days of spring-time flee—
 The king has not espoused his daughter,
 Nor cares about her marriage he.
 To whom shall she unveil her sorrow ?
 To whom confide her misery ?
 She thought of summoning the monarch—
 He her guide was used to be—
 And to confess to him her secret,
 All her wishes openly.
 The king he came when he was summoned ;
 Thither came he hastily ;
 He found her desolate and gloomy,
 With her grief in secrecy ;
 And her lovely face was shaded
 With a dark anxiety ;
 And the monarch soon discovered
 There was woe and misery.
 “ What is this, belov’d Infanta ?
 Daughter, tell thy griefs to me—
 Tell me, tell me all thy sorrows,
 Whence this strange despondency ?
 Tell me: when I know thy grievance,
 I shall find a remedy.”
 “ Worthy king, ’tis hard to find it ;
 Remedy is none for me ;

* Mr Lockhart and Dr Bowring especially.

When my mother died she left me,
 Left me with this charge to thee :
 That thou shouldst, good king I betrothe me—
 At my age 'twas meet for me.
 'Tis with shame that I require it,
 Shame that strives with modesty ;
 But these cares are thine, oh monarch !
 Cares like these belong to thee !"
 When the king had heard his daughter,
 Thus his daughter answered he :—
 " This has been thy fault, Infanta !
 Thine the fault, and blame not me ;
 Long ago I had espoused thee
 With the Prince of Hungary ;
 But thou turn'dst away disdainful
 From his suppliant embassy.
 Here, among our Spanish Cortes,
 There was no nobility :
 There was none in all my kingdom
 High enough to wed with thee,
 Save alone the Count Alarcos,
 Who had wife and family."
 " King! invite the Count Alarcos
 To your table, and from me,
 Soon as your repast is over,
 Bid him on his fealty,
 Bid him all his vows remember,
 All his pledged sincerity :
 Tell him of his plighted promise—
 Promise never forced by me—
 That he would become my husband,
 And that I his wife should be :
 I was happy then, and never
 From that hour repented me ;
 If he married with the countess,
 'Twas his own foul treachery ;
 When for him I had rejected
 The young Prince of Hungary.
 And if he espoused the countess,
 Let him blame himself, not me !"
 Hardly could the shuddering monarch
 Check his rising agony ;
 But his inward thoughts repressing,
 Thus he answered angrily :—
 " Far, far different were the counsels
 Which thy mother gave to thee ;
 And my honour, oh Infanta !
 Thou hast wounded cruelly.
 And if this be true, thy honour
 Thou hast wrecked unblushingly ;

For the countless lives—thou never,
Never canst espoused be ;
Honour, justice, my Infanta,
In such nuptials ne'er agree ;
Scorn will wait thee, shame attack thee—
Scorn, and shame, and infamy.
Give me counsels I intreat thee,
Mine avail me not—and she—
She, thy mother, is departed,
Who was wont to counsel me.”
“ I will give thee counsel, monarch !
Let thy guide my counsel be—
Bid the count destroy the countess—
No one will suspect 'twas he ;
Let it all abroad be bruited
That she died of malady ;
Then we may arrange our marriage
As a thing of novelty :
And, good king ! my sacred honour
Shall from every stain be free.”
So the monarch left the Infanta,
Not as wonted—cheerfully ;
But his thoughts were dark and gloomy,
Tortured by anxiety.
With his knights he found Alarcos
Uttering words of gaiety.
“ Knights ! it is a worthless service
At a mistress' feet to be ;
Love is but an idle shadow,
Love—without fidelity.
I at least can claim the honour
Of affection's constancy.
Faithful when I loved the maiden,
Faithful though my wife she be ;
And if then I loved her dearly,
Now she is more dear to me.
Knights ! there is one faithful union—
Honest love and memory.”
Here he saw the king approaching,
And he ended—gallantly,
Left the crowd of knights around him,
Bending to the king his knee.
“ Count Alarcos,” said the monarch,
While he hailed him courteously,
“ Thou must be my guest, Alarcos,
And to-morrow let it be—
Thou must dine with me to-morrow :
Give me thy good company.”
“ Proud and honoured, I attend thee,
Thanks to thy high majesty.”

And the royal hands saluting,
Hail their flattering courtesies.
"Though I had prepared for travel,
That shall be deferred for thee,
Though the countess writes to tell me
That she waits me anxiously."
Morrow came : the king, retiring
From the mass's mystery,
Sat him down before his table ;
Little appetite had he ;
There he sat in anxious trouble,
Looking round him restlessly.
They were served with pomp and honour,
As a mighty king should be :
When the feast was done, the pages
Left the apartment silently,
And the king and Count Alarcos
All alone, the monarch, he,
Hesitating, trembling, dreading,
Entered on his embassy :
"I have melancholy tidings,
Tidings sad to thee and me,
Cause have I for loud complaining
Of the count's discourtesy.
Thou wert pledged to the Infanta,
Though she asked no pledge of thee ;
Thou wert sworn to be her husband,
She was sworn thy wife to be.
What besides has passed between ye,
Need not be divulged by me ;
But what I require, Alarcos,
Thou wilt hear with agony.
Count! thou must destroy the countess,
This my honour asks of thee,
And let it be straight reported
That she died of malady.
So you shall arrange your marriage
As a thing of novelty ;
And my well-belovèd daughter
Of dishonour shall be free."
When the monarch ceased, Alarcos
Answered thus respectfully :—
"Truly has the Infanta spoken,
She has spoken verity.
Why deny it? her confessions
Are but truth and honesty.
If I broke my promise, monarch,
'Twas from my respect for thee,
For I never dared imagine
Thou so high wouldst honour me.

Sire, I'll marry the Infanta
At thy mandate, cheerfully ;
But, sire, to destroy the countess,
That can never, never be.
She deserves not death—death never
Fell on one so pure as she.”
“Yes, good count ! her death is needful
For my honour and for me ;
Wherefore, when thou didst espouse her,
Didst thou act with treachery !
If thou do not slay the countess,
Thou the sacrifice shall be :
Count ! for monarchs' sacred honour,
Many perish guiltlessly !
And the countess' death has nothing
Of such wondrous mystery.”
“I will kill her, king ! but never
Let the crime be laid on me ;
Thou shalt make the account with Heaven,
When thy death-hour visits thee.
I have sworn I will destroy her,
By the vows of chivalry.
If I fail, the recreants' curses,
Traitor's vengeance light on me ;
Yes ! I will destroy the countess,
Though no taint of crime has she.
King ! 'tis settled—my departure
Only waits a word from thee.”
“Go with God ! good Count Alarcos ;
Go prepare thee speedily.”
Weeping mounts the Count Alarcos ;
Weeping bitterest tears is he—
Weeping for his wife devoted,
Whom he loved so tenderly ;
Weeping for his infant children—
Infant children there were three,
One was yet a helpless baby
Nursed upon his mother's knee ;
Nurses three had bared their bosoms,
He rejected all the three ;
For he knew his tender mother,
And upon her breast would be.
Other two were little children,
Thoughtless, careless, gay, and free.
Ere the count had reached his dwelling,
This was his soliloquy :—
“Who thy face of joy, my countess,
Who thy face of joy can see ;
Hastening with thy cheerful welcome
At thy life's extremity !

Wretched I, the sad, the guilty—
All this shame shall light on me!"
Here he saw the countess coming
With her smile of gaiety;
For her little page had told her,
He had told her that 'twas he.
When she saw the Count Alarcos
Looking so despondingly,
With his eyelids swollen and sleepless,
Dull with grief and misery;
All his way he had been weeping
For his murderous embassy.
"Welcome! welcome!" cried the countess,
"Thou my life's felicity!
Count, what ails thee? count, what ails thee?
Why dost weep so mournfully?
All thy countenance is altered—
I had even mistaken thee:
These are looks to thee a stranger,
All thy smiles departed be:
Tell thy sorrow, tell thy sorrow,
As thou tell'st thy joy to me?
Tell me, charm of my existence!
Tell me, tell me speedily!"
"I will tell thee all, my countess,
When the proper hour shall be."
"Tell me, count, or I shall perish
Under my anxiety!"
"Cease to urge me now, my countess,
All shall soon be told to thee;
Let the supper be provided,
What there is, and instantly."
"All is ready, Count Alarcos, '
Ready as 'tis used to be."
Down they sat to sup together,
Little appetite had he;
All his infant sons sat round him,
For he loved them tenderly.
Then he bent him on his forehead
As if sleeping weariedly;
And his tears bedewed the table,
Flowing from his mournful ee.
Towards him turns the tender countess,
Ignorant of all was she;
Speak she dared not—he had sternly
Checked her curiosity.
But at last he rose impatient:
"I would fain repose," said he.
And the countess uttered briefly,
"I, too, will repose with thee."

There was no repose between them,
If I tell the verity.
So they went, the count and countess,
To the accustomed dormit'ry :
Next they sent away the children ;
So the count would have it be :
Save the tender little nursling,
Sleeping on his mother's knee.
Then the count—a thing unusual—
Closed the portal carefully ;
And these accents, faint and smothered,
Soon unveiled his agony :
" Oh thou miserable countess !
Dreadful is thy misery."
" Count ! oh no ! I deem me happy,
I am happy still with thee :
Am I not thy wife ?—and nothing
Can be misery now to me."
" Yes ! thou art my wife, my countess !
Wretched is thy destiny.
Countess, know, in earlier seasons,
Other love had fettered me.
'Twas the Infanta. Yes ! I loved her,
Luckless lot for me and thee ;
And to her I pledged my promise,
And that promise pledged her : she
Now demands me for her husband,
On my vow of constancy :
Well, indeed, she may require it,
On my truth and honesty ;
And the king her father claims me—
He has heard our history.
He has ordered—ah ! the mandate
Scathes my soul with misery—
He has ordered thou must perish !—
Thou art in extremity.
For his honour must be tainted
While thy life is spared to thee."
To the earth the countess bent her,
Bent her in her agony—
Fainted—till at last recovered,
This she uttered mournfully :—
" Thus, then, thus am I rewarded
For my fond fidelity !
Kill me not—a better counsel
I would offer, count, to thee ;
Send me to my native dwelling,
Where I passed my infancy ;
I will educate your children,
Lead them—love them tenderly,

And preserve to thee, as ever,
An unbroken chastity."

"Thou must die—must die, my countess,
Ere the morn wakes smilingly!"

"It were well, my Count Alarcos,
Well—if there were none but me ;
But I have an aged father—
(Oh! my mother tranquilly
Sleeps in death). My brother Garcia,
He was murdered cruelly—
He, the noble count was murdered
For the king's dark jealousy.
Death afflicts me not—for mortal,
Mortal I was born to be—
But my children's fate afflicts me,
They must lose my company :
Let them come and take my blessing,
They my last farewell must see."

"Never shalt thou see them, countess,
Earth has no such bless for thee ;
But embrace thy smiling infant,
Now condemned to orphanacy :
Miserable is my duty—
'Tis the excess of misery.
Vain is all my wish, my lady,
Though I gave my life for thee—
'Tis thy doom—so now commend thee
To the Eternal Deity."

"Let me utter one petition,
One—in all humility !"

"Countess, ere the dawn of morning,
Pour thy offering speedily."

"Soon it will be said, Alarcos,
Sooner than an Ave Marie."

This was her petition, bending
In the dust her trembling knee :—
"Father, humbly I commend me,
I commit my soul to thee :
Judge me not by what I merit,
Judge me, Lord, benignantly ;
By thy grace and gentle mercy,
And thy love's benignity !
Count—my count—the prayer is uttered,
Uttered as 'twas wont to be ;
To thee I commend our children,
Born in love 'twixt me and thee.
And while life is thine, Alarcos,
Pour thy prayers to Heaven for me—
If thou art compelled to slay me,
Count, I perish guiltlessly :

Let me nurse that little infant,
 Smiles my farewell then shall be."
 "Oh! disturb him not, my countess,
 He is sleeping tranquilly:
 Pardon—for the day is breaking,
 Pardon me! oh pardon me!"
 "Thou art pardoned, Count Alarcos,
 For the love I bore to thee;
 But the monarch and the Infanta
 Never shall they pardoned be.
 They to justice shall be summoned,
 Shall be summoned speedily
 At the dreadful bar of Heaven
 Ere the thirtieth day shall flee."
 While she uttered this, Alarcos
 Seized the countess forcibly—
 By her throat a while he held her
 With a scarf most cruelly;
 Pressed her with his hands, applying
 All his strength—nor let her free
 While a spark of life remained:
 So she perished horribly.
 When he saw she had departed—
 Ceased the dying agony—
 Straight he stripped her of her garments,
 All she wore, and hurriedly
 Laid her on her bed, as wonted,
 Sleeping as she used to be;
 Next, he stretched himself beside her—
 'Twas a moment's history.
 Then he roused him—shouting loudly
 To his gathering servants—"See,
 See the countess is expiring!
 Help her, help her speedily!"
 'Twas too late—in vain all succour,
 Dead beyond relief was she;
 So she died, and most unjustly;
 Cruelly and secretly.
 But the other three all followed
 Ere the thirty days did flee:
 On the twelfth the vile Infanta,
 Stretched upon her bier we see:
 Twenty-five, the monarch's portion;
 On the thirtieth, perished he—
 He, the count—they all departed,
 Summoned to eternity!
 Here may God in grace preserve us,
 There reward us gloriously!

in our nursery tale of 'Blue Beard,' the atrocious conduct

of the hero is related with perfect simplicity, as if it were a matter of common occurrence; and our youthful interest has been again and again excited by incidents which we now regard as impossible. One might deem many of these chivalrous romances the offspring of an infantine imagination, fertile in proportion to the absence of artificial culture, and pleasing itself with its own creations in wilful ignorance of the world as it really is.

Closely allied to the chivalric romances, and still more remarkable for primitive simplicity, were the *historical*, framed to recount interesting events of real occurrence as matter of popular recreation. There are some upon Scripture facts, and others on those of Grecian history; but most of them relate to matters connected with Spain, from the time of Don Roderick, the last king of the Visigoths, till the final expulsion of the Moors. There is scarcely an occurrence of national importance during this period that has not given rise to at least one romance. Sometimes the events of an entire reign are related in quatrains; but more frequently each historical ballad treats of a single act, or consists of a simple picture of a single situation; and none of them display those entanglements and developments which distinguish the longer romances of chivalry. Of course their number is prodigious. Thousands doubtless have perished; and it is believed that by arranging even those which remain in the chronological order of the events which they celebrate, a complete history of Spanish affairs from the tenth till the sixteenth century might be obtained. Indeed they have been generally used by historians as confirmatory of sober narrative; and it is said that the great national chronicle, drawn up by order of Alphonso the Wise, was based chiefly on the lays of the minstrels, while it in turn gave rise to an extensive series of romances.

The most prolific subjects of historical ballads were the conquest and destruction of Don Roderick; the heroic achievements of Bernardo del Carpio; the tragic occurrences which befell Lara and his children; the origin and foundation of the Castilian monarchy; the turbulent reign of Peter the Cruel; the victories of the holy King Ferdinand over the Moors; and the conquest of the kingdom of Granada. But the life of the Cid in this respect eclipses all the rest; above one hundred of those composed on his adventures are still extant. The Cid, returning from exile, visits the church of St Peter, and pronounces a short soliloquy: this is enough for a romance. Again, the king joins the hands of the Cid and Ximena, and invests him with fiefs of castles and territories, which are minutely specified: this serves for another. A third is framed on the Cid laying aside his armour, and putting on his wedding

, which is minutely described from the hat to the boots.*
 is the nature of a host of these ballads. The merit connected
 them is chiefly where the author has succeeded in managing
 details, so as to give the best effect to the main features of
 narrative; and it often depended on good fortune, rather than
 the skill of the narrator, whether his romance became popular
 or sank into oblivion.

Though the purely historical ballads owe nothing to the inven-
 tion of the poet, because he would not run the risk of
 losing the credit of his narration by embellishing it with ficti-
 tious circumstances, yet the bounds which define the historical
 the poetic were by no means strictly observed. To throw an
 admitted fact into the form of a song for the guitar, was not
 considered inconsistent with the spirit of genuine national history;
 nor less did the recital of a fictitious story as a real event in
 history seem contrary to the spirit of poetry; and from this
 blurring of the limits of the epic and the historic, it happens that
 Don Roderick and other favourite heroes of Spain have come to occupy
 a position midway between history and fable.

The following describes the situation of Don Roderick after
 his overthrow by the Moors in 711 A.D. :—

Hosts of Don Rodrigo were scattered in dismay,
 when lost was the eighth battle, nor heart nor hope had they;
 when he saw the field was lost, and all his hope was flown,
 turned him from his flying host, and took his way alone.

His horse was bleeding, blind, and lame, he could no farther go;
 mounted, without path or aim the king stepped to and fro:
 was a sight of pity to look on Roderick,
 sore athirst and hungry, he staggered faint and sick.

Stained and smeared with dust and blood, like to some smoulder-
 ing brand,
 flickered from the flame, Rodrigo showed; his sword was in his hand;
 it was hacked into a saw of dark and purple tint;
 jewelled mail had many a flaw, his helmet many a dint.

He climbed into a hill top, the highest he could see;
 once all about of that wide route, his last long look took he;
 saw his royal banners where they lay drenched and torn,
 heard the cry of victory, the Arab shout of scorn.

In general the armour, and the device of the knight, are particularly described;
 Bouterwek has remarked, that by studying these, an ingenious artist might
 for himself a new field for historical painting. Mr Lockhart has profited by
 suggestion, and published translations of many of these romances, accom-
 panied with splendid illustrations.

He looked for the brave captains who had led the hosts of Spain,
 But all were fled except the dead, and who could count the slain?
 Where'er his eye could wander, all bloody was the plain;
 And while thus he spoke, the tears he shed ran down his cheeks like
 rain:—

"Last night I was the king of Spain—to-day no king am I;
 Last night fair castles held my train—to-night, where shall I lie!
 Last night a hundred pages did serve me on the knee,
 To-night not one I call my own—not one pertains to me.

Oh luckless, luckless was the hour, and cursed was the day,
 When I was born to have the power of this great seignory!
 Unhappy one, that I should see the sun go down to-night!
 Oh Death! why now so slow art thou, why fearest thou to smite!"

—LOCKHART.

The Return of the Cid.

Now the Cid returning glorious
 From Valencia's battle-field,
 Bends his way towards St Mary's,
 For his mercies thanks to yield.

Hark! the trumpets loudly sounding,
 Tell that he is on his way;
 Hark! above their warlike music
 Babieca's* joyful neigh.

Forth the monks and abbots issue
 To receive him at the gate;
 Lift their voice in loud thanksgiving,
 And the Cid congratulate.

From his horse the Cid alighting,
 Takes into his hands the banner,
 Stands without the sacred portal,
 Vents his feelings in this manner:—

'Sad I left thee, holy temple,
 Banished by the king's commands;
 But another home was given me
 By my sword in Moorish lands.

This the secret of his anger—
 That I swore him by his God,
 Ere I pledged him my allegiance,
 That he shed not Sancho's blood.

Jealous for my sovereign's honour,
 I his interests thought to serve;

* *Babieca* was the Cid's favourite charger, and only second to himself in fame.

But none holds the laws more sacred,
Never from them did I swerve.

Oh, Castilians, ever jealous!
Has my sword been your defence?
Spread your fame—enlarged your borders:
And was this my recompense?

Now I bring another kingdom,
Frontiers taken from the Moors;
All my own—to you I give them;
Though you drove me far from yours.

I could give these lands to others,
But the deed be far from me:
Roderick of Bivar I am,
Castilian—as he ought to be!

oldest *Moorish* romances were peculiar to the south of as the historic and chivalric owed their origin to the ains of Asturias and Castile. The internal commotions of Moorish kingdoms were more stirring, sudden, and violent those of the Christian states, and among the former ally, the lives of renowned warriors, and the conflicts of ng tribes, were exceedingly fertile in incident. The subjects frequently and happily depicted in Moorish romances are our of love, and the fury of jealousy among the Moslems; nder languishings of similar passions in their wives; and illiant festivals in which both sexes were accustomed to ; for it must be remembered that the Moorish females in were by no means subject to the rigorous seclusion which ls in the Mohammedan countries of the East. One romance us a warrior in presence of his lady, proudly prancing with the veil which she has allowed him to take, or with sh that beauty's hands have embroidered. In another he wishes himself in the tourney, or spurs his courser into the promenade. Now he is depicted as a lover blind with rage, out of the treachery of the coquettish fair; and again he exile, the victim of faction, casting a last look on the city his beloved dwells. Besides, there are spirited descrip- of tournaments, bull-feasts, and other festal scenes at la. But the smallest of the Moorish romances are beau- nd besides their poetic merit, they are valuable from the ess with which they depict the feelings, customs, manners, en the dresses of the people. The domestic as well as the *life of this singular race* is thus brought palpably before

us, so that we can see the sons of the desert just as they were, when transplanted into the fertile regions of Spain—

‘As steel among weapons,
As wax among women.’*

The Spanish people were not slow to appreciate the poetic charm which attached to Moorish Orientalism. European chivalry became highly imposing from the addition of Eastern luxury, which favoured the display of splendid armour, nodding plumes, and showy emblematical devices. A generous feeling pervaded both nations in according to each the merit it deserved; at least this was the case in reference to the distinguished leaders of both; so that one of the old Spanish songs condescends to designate the hostile warriors as

‘Cavaliers of Granada—
Gentlemen, though infidels.’

No marvel, then, that the Castilian poets often exercised their talents on Moorish subjects, and endeavoured, not without success, to treat them in true Oriental style. As this, however, required an accurate knowledge of Moorish manners, it was not much cultivated till the latter half of the fifteenth century, when the Christians were about to strike the last blow for the deliverance of their beloved land from the Mohammedan yoke; and when everything relating to the history of the Moor who had so long usurped their territories, was matter of intense interest, heightened by the warlike character and gallant bearing of these enemies of their faith. The rival factions of Zegris and Abenzerrages, whose mutual animosities hastened the downfall of Granada, were especial objects of attention; and it seems to have been customary to make the heroes of these two contending tribes sustain the principal characters in the popular songs of Castile and Arragon.

The impulse given in this direction did not cease with the destruction of the Moorish sovereignty. When the struggle was over, the conquerors had leisure to cultivate a closer acquaintance with the vanquished people; and as they listened to their Oriental songs in the splendid streets of the city, or on the delightful plains of the Vega, they endeavoured to transfer them to their own language. So late as the middle of the sixteenth century, Argote de Molina heard the Moors singing plaintive romances, which he tells us were in the verse of Spanish dirges.

The following beautiful translation of one of the best of these productions will be acceptable to the English reader:—

* ‘Fuerzas qual acero entre armas,
Y qual cera entre las damas.’

'Sale la estrella de Venus.'

'Now appears the star of Venus,
Sol's last ray the mountain gilds,
While the night in dusky mantle
Travels o'er the darkening fields.

See you Moorish warrior flying
From Sidonia's open gate,
Near the sunny banks of Xeres,
Fierce and proud—but desolate.

By the stream of Guadalete,
To that port of splendid fame,
Honoured by far distant ages
With our blessed lady's name.*

He is born of lineage noble,
All his sires of high degree,
But his once loved maid has left him,
Taunting him with poverty.

Faithless fair one! and this evening
She has pledged her recreant hand
To proud Séville's base Alcaldè,
Dignified with high command.

To the careless winds of heaven,
To the rocks and woods he cries;
Nought but pitying echo hears him—
Pitying echo still replies.

"Zaydè! Zaydè! far more cruel
Than the wreck-absorbing wave;
Harder than the hardest mountain,
Whose old feet the waters lave;

Tell me, cruel maiden! tell me,
Shall the charms that once were mine
Be devoted to another?
Wilt thou call another thine?

Wilt thou twine thy youthful tendrils
Round a proud and rugged tree;
Leaving mine all stripp'd and blasted;
Flowerless—fruitless—left by thee?

* Port Santa Maria.

He, thy choice, is poor though wealthy—
 Him whom thou fleest, rich though poor :
 Hast thou learnt than wealth of spirit
 Wealth of clay to value more !

Wilt thou, then, Gazul abandon,
 Six sweet years of love now flown,
 For this treacherous Albenzaydè,
 For this stranger all unknown !

Oh may Allah, in his justice,
 Give thee for thy love his hate—
 While in dark communion near thee
 Jealousy and fury wait !

Let no slumbers soothe thy pillow,
 Tired and restless night and day ;
 Grief and sorrows thicken round thee,
 Peace, and hope, and joy decay !

When the festive crowds assemble,
 Shouts and music fill the air,
 May he guard thee like a prisoner,
 Chained to darkness and despair !

May he scorn thee at the tourney,
 So to torture thy proud thought ;
 And despise the rich *almayzar* *
 And the *manga* † thou hast wrought !

Mayest thou see another maiden's
 Name upon his battle-shield :
 Let him give to her his prisoners,
 Turning from the battle-field !

Rather in the Christian's battle
 Mayest thou see that husband die ;
 May he die ere he enjoy thee ;
 Let my curses round him fly !

But shouldst thou indeed abhor him,
 Be he thine for ages ! Worse
 Hatred's self can never wish thee,
 Malice has no bitterer curse !"

Thus he spoke, and straight to Xeres,
 Full of madness sped along,

* *Almayzar*, a gauze veil worn by Moorish ladies.

† *Manga*, a cloak-bag in the form of (*manga*) a sleeve.

SECOND PERIOD.

And he finds the Alcaldè's palace
Bright with torches, gay with song.

There a thousand lamps are burning,
Thousand voices shouting there ;
All is gaiety and gladness—
What does this intruder here !

He his trusty steed has mounted,
To the bridegroom swift he hies,
And the crowds make way before him,
While he pays his courtesies.

Ha ! his bloody lance has traversed
The Alcaldè's fluttering breast,
And his life-blood now is flowing,
Flowing through his purple vest.

Oh what horror, what confusion,
Desolation and dismay !
While the stern, unnoticed murderer,
To Medina takes his way.*

On account of the simplicity of their versification, poems of this kind were so easily written, that they were produced in hundreds, and no small jealousy arose among the orthodox when it appeared that the number of Moorish romances exceeded the Spanish. Several poets, stimulated by religious or patriotic feeling, raised their voice against this predilection for topics connected with an infidel nation. One of them, in the fervour of his zeal, exclaims—

'Justice, Apollo ! vengeance just !
Launch forth thine arrows, do not spare
The bards who thus betray their trust,
And to profane thy kingdom dare.'

* Fernandez, vol. xvi. p. 94. Bowring's *Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain*, 149.

EARLY LYRIC POETRY.

In ancient Spanish poetry, the strictly lyric does not form an essentially different class from the narrative. It was the custom to designate by the general name of romance any expression of the feelings flowing in the popular mode, in a stream of redondillas without distinct strophes, which was the usual form of narrative romances. When, however, the composition was divided, it was usually called a *cancion*, or song. This name came afterwards to be applied to lyrical pieces of greater research and more elevated character, if they were divided into strophes. Numerous lyric compositions are preserved in the collections of ancient romances, and are of older date than those in *coplas* or strophes, which appear in the collections of *canciones*. Many of them are as simple and as beautiful as the following, in which the wild imagination and melancholy feeling of the Arabs may be recognised in the garb of a European language:—

Fount of Freshness.

‘Fount of freshness!—fount of freshness!

Fount of freshness and of love!

Where the little birds of spring-time

Seek for comfort as they rove:

All except the widowed turtle—

Widowed, sorrowing turtle-dove.

There the nightingale, the traitor!

Lingered on his giddy way;

And these words of hidden treachery

To the dove I heard him say:

“I will be thy servant, lady!

I will ne’er thy love betray.”

“Off! false hearted! vile deceiver!

Leave me, nor insult me so:

Dwell I, then, ’midst gaudy flow’rets?

Perch I on the verdant bough?

Even the waters of the fountain

Drink I dark and troubled now.

Never will I think of marriage—

Never break the widow-vow.

“Had I children, they would grieve me,

They would wean me from my wo:

Leave me, false one!—thoughtless traitor!
 Base one!—vain one!—sad one!—go!
 I can never, never love thee—
 I will never wed thee—no!”

Lovely Flow’ret.

“Lovely flow’ret!—lovely flow’ret!
 Oh what thoughts your beauties move!
 When I pressed thee to my bosom,
 Little did I know of love;
 Now that I have learned to love thee,
 Seeking thee in vain I rove.”
 “But the fault was thine, young warrior;
 Thine it was—it was not mine;
 He who brought thy earliest letter
 Was a messenger of thine;
 And he told me—graceless traitor—
 Yes! he told me—lying one!—
 That thou wert already married
 In the province of Leon;
 Where thou hadst a lovely lady,
 And, like flowers too, many a son.”
 “Lady, he was but a traitor,
 And his tale was all untrue;
 In Castile I never entered,
 From Leon, too, I withdrew
 When I was in early boyhood,
 And of love I nothing knew.”—BOWRING.

is kind of poetry seems to have been held in great esteem
 g the latter half of the fourteenth century. But all the
 s so honoured in their day were forgotten at the commence-
 of the fifteenth, when, under the patronage of John II., a
 race of poets arose, who completely eclipsed their prede-
 rs.

POETICAL COURT OF JOHN II.

1407—1454.

e long reign of John II. was as showy in a literary as it
 unfortunate in a political point of view. Castile was now
 alsed with intestine commotions. During the latter years
 e fourteenth century the powerful barons had nearly wrested
 sceptre from the hands of John I. and Henry III., and the
 rchy was again and again threatened with destruction under

John II. The nobles sported with the royal prerogatives, and the king had not firmness enough to maintain them. Having no taste for public affairs, he abandoned them almost entirely to the control of the Constable Alvaro de Luna, whose corrupt administration led to a combination of the nobles for his destruction. Meanwhile the king—a popinjay among mail-clad barons—spent his time, as is recorded of his contemporary James I. of Scotland, ‘yn redyn of romans, yn synging, yn harpyng and yn alle other solaces of grete plezance and delyghte.’ He drew around him all the most intellectual men in his kingdom, literature became the fashion, and poetry a social necessity. It might be that the king abandoned himself to letters chiefly to avoid the solicitation of state affairs, and to gratify his constitutional indolence; but the result was, that he attached to his person and service many of the most influential grandees in the country; on many difficult occasions, and in many trying positions, he found support and deliverance from the members of his poetical court; and to his literary taste, rather than to his political skill, he was indebted for the preservation of his crown. It would be difficult to find in the history of any other country such an example of a court composed of men at once poets, statesmen, and warriors, surrounding and supporting a literary sovereign during a period of civil commotion, in spite of the feebleness of his political character. It affords a fine evidence of the supremacy which the poetic feeling must have attained in Spain, that it was not to be overcome by the most powerful spirit of political faction.

The courtly circle consisted chiefly of Castilian nobles, among whom the national muse continued to be the favourite, but who thought to raise its dignity by making it more learned, and to render it more attractive by greater ingenuity in invention and skill in composition. They brought the *versos de arte mayor* again into use, because these artificial strophes wore a more learned aspect than the easy-flowing redondillas. They cultivated allegory, and introduced subtilties and ingenious difficulties of every kind into their verse, being desirous, like Alphonso X., to unite the reputation of learning and philosophy with that of poetry. The old Gothic Christian proportions, dear to the nation, were abandoned for the classical, mythological, and Italian. Yet nature often triumphed over pedantic refinement, and the graceful facility of the popular style often peeped out in spite of their efforts to repress it. In this manner the ancient national poetry became connected with works of laborious art, and ultimately rose in public estimation. The ancient lyrics of Spain especially, received from these authors that cultivation which finally brought them to the highest state of perfection that they were destined ever to

attain. The reign of John II., therefore, marked an epoch of change, not indeed in the genius and spirit, but in the style of the national poetry.

THE MARQUIS OF VILLENA.

1384—1436.

Among the first of these poetical courtiers was the Marquis Henry of Villena, a nobleman descended from the royal families of Castile and Arragon. He endeavoured to adorn his erudition with the lyric graces of the Limosin troubadours, who had then attained their highest celebrity at the court of Arragon; and by the union of learning with poetry, he endeavoured to adapt both to the Castilian taste. In Arragon he attempted, but without success, to establish an 'Academy of Troubadours' for the cultivation of the Provençal language; and at the same time he founded a similar institution in Castile, under the title of 'Consistorio de la gaya Ciencia,' for the encouragement of Castilian poetry. To this assembly he dedicated an 'Art of Poetry,' which has been partially preserved, and is regarded as the oldest work of the kind in the language. One of its objects is to show how important is the union of erudition with imagination, and how expedient it is in the cultivation of modern literature to profit by the progress that has been made in classical learning. Among his general observations the Marquis says, 'Great are the benefits which the art of poetry confers, by banishing indolence, and employing noble minds in laudable pursuits. Other nations have, accordingly, desired and established institutions for its encouragement, by which it has been diffused over different parts of the world.' The labours of this active and zealous nobleman contributed much to heighten the respect in which literary pursuits were then held; but it does not appear that they had any other than an indirect influence on the advancement of Castilian poetry. His reputation for skill in metaphysics and natural philosophy became so great, that—such was the ignorance of the age—he came at last to be regarded as a sorcerer, and his large and rare collection of books excited such alarm after his death, that two cart-loads of them were committed to the tender mercies of a priest, who burned above a hundred volumes which he could not read, much less understand. Villena's principal work was a treatise in prose on the labours of Hercules, divided into twelve chapters, each occupied with one of the great labours of the demigod. He first gives the common mytho-

logical story of each; then an explanation of it, as if it were an allegory; thirdly, the historical facts on which he supposes it to have been founded; and lastly, a moral application to one of the twelve conditions into which the author chooses to divide the human race, beginning with princes, and ending with women. Villena was also the author of an allegorical drama which was performed on the occasion of a marriage at the court of Arragon, whence it is supposed that it was written in the Limosin rather than in the Castilian language. Truth, Justice, Clemency, and Peace, are said to have been four of its characters.

THE MARQUIS OF SANTILLANA.

1398—1458.

After the death of Villena, his literary position was occupied by Don Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, Marques de Santillana. The military talents for which he was distinguished in very early life, combined with his high rank and large fortune to place him in a position of great influence in the state. But, to use his own language, he believed that 'knowledge neither blunts the point of the lance, nor weakens the arm that wields a knightly sword.' He was indefatigable in collecting books and manuscripts, which was then the rage in Italy. His intellectual culture was based on the philosophy of Socrates, and the severity and purity of his manners, no less than his sound understanding and love of science, contributed to the high reputation which he enjoyed. He was indeed accounted so extraordinary a man, that strangers, it is said, were in the habit of visiting Castile for the sole purpose of seeing him. During the internal commotions of that kingdom he did not invariably attach himself to the royal party, though the king made assiduous efforts to maintain his friendship. The tyrannical proceedings of the Constable against the friends and relations of Santillana induced him to join the conspiracy which terminated in the sacrifice of the favourite, though it appears he did not take part in the last scenes of the tragedy. After the death of John II. (1454), Santillana became the counsellor of Henry IV., but was unable to save the royal power from being almost annihilated.

The literary works of this eminent nobleman belong partly to the Provençal school and partly to the Italian, but still more to the truly Spanish, which prevails over both. In his own day they owed their reputation chiefly to a pedantic display of learning, which does not by any means enhance their value in an age of

better taste. But a passionate love of erudition prevailed both in Spain and Italy during the fifteenth century, and the Marquis has frequently laid Dante and other Italian poets under contribution for allegories, while all antiquity has been ransacked for quotations. His works are thus rendered dull and tiresome, and the poetic talent, which he certainly possessed in no mean degree, is almost smothered under a heap of allusions and citations.

The most considerable piece now remaining is entitled the '*Comedieta de Ponza*,' or '*Little Comedy of Ponza*,' founded on the disastrous naval action near an island of that name, in 1435. It is in the form of a vision, and called a comedy—not on account of its approaching the form of a drama, but because it is brought to a happy conclusion by prospects of a brighter future, argued by reference to a glorious past. The verse is the old Italian octave, and many passages are obviously borrowed from Dante. Another considerable work is a lyric allegory on the death of Villena, in which the poet loses himself in a desert, and is surrounded by wild animals; as he advances, he hears tones of lamentation, and presently discovers several nymphs in mourning, who are bewailing the loss and chanting the merits of Villena. By crowding into this piece as many names of deities as possible, with authors ancient and modern, he renders the whole such a display of erudition as had never before appeared in the language of Castile.

The only other considerable poem of this author is entitled '*The Manual of Favourites*,' written in consequence of the fate of the unfortunate Constable Alvaro de Luna. This is the earliest didactic poem in the Spanish language. It is written in *redondillas*, and has received a poetic cast from the manner in which the shade of Don Alvaro is introduced confessing his faults, while he gives utterance to those moral truths which the Marquis wished to impress on the minds of the restless Castilians:—

For the ruin of their owner,
Treasures I have seen amassed :
Like a dream or like a shadow,
All our days are quickly passed.
Tears and penitential sorrow
May perhaps prolong the time,
But it will not be extended
By continuing in crime.

Come and see a sad example!
Look on my unquiet shade;
Start not—sure 'tis nought uncommon,
When the bones in dust are laid,
That the lonely, restless spirit,
Whom a sense of guilt doth fill,

Walks the earth with ceaseless labour,
Seeking to undo the ill.

I was fond of place and power,
Grasped the wealth that was not mine,
Seized the friendless stranger's dwelling,
Left him in despair to pine.
Now, O where are all my riches?
Come, the sad reverse behold!
For this gain my soul is bartered;
Can a spirit's loss be told?

His pleasing style of versification does something towards relieving the otherwise intolerable pedantry of this writer. A hymn, entitled the 'Joys of our Lady,' has been preserved, but it has no poetic merit. His 'Centiloquio,' or collection of one hundred moral and political maxims, each contained in eight short verses, was composed for the instruction of the young prince who became Henry IV. It has enjoyed a high reputation, having passed through several editions, accompanied with comments, both in Spain and foreign countries. While in prison, the Marquis wrote a curious work under the title of 'Dialogue between Bias and Fortune,' and placed it at the beginning of the 'Life of the Greek Philosopher.'

But amid these didactic and stately poems we must not overlook some lighter ones, which possess all the sweetness and simplicity of the most pleasing pastorals. The *Serranilla*, composed on a little girl whom he found tending her father's herds on the hills where he was on military duty, is considered one of the most graceful of the smaller poems in the Spanish language. Though in the Provençal style, it is replete with the simplicity and liquid sweetness of the old Castilian song, and its beauties can never be transferred to another language. The following translation of it is from the elegant pen of Mr Wiffen:—

*Serranilla.**

'I ne'er on the border
Saw girl fair as Rosa,
The charming milk-maiden
Of sweet Finojosa.

Once making a journey
To Santa Maria
Of Calataveño,
From weary desire

* *Serranilla* means a little mountain song.

Of sleep, down a valley
 I strayed, where young Rosa
 I saw, the milk-maiden
 Of lone Finojosa.

In a pleasant green meadow
 'Midst roses and grasses,
 Her herd she was tending,
 With other fair lasses;
 So lovely her aspect,
 I could not suppose her
 A simple milk-maiden
 Of rude Finojosa.

I think not primroses
 Have half her smile's sweetness,
 Or mild modest beauty;
 (I speak with discreetness.)
 Oh had I beforehand
 But known of this Rosa,
 The handsome milk-maiden
 Of far Finojosa!

Her very great beauty
 Had not so subdued,
 Because it had left me
 To do as I would.
 I have said more, oh fair one!
 By learning 'twas Rosa,
 The charming milk-maiden
 Of sweet Finojosa.'

the most remarkable of the literary remains of the Marquis
 tillana is his 'Critical and Historical Letter,' which is
 mentioned in the early accounts of Spanish poetry, as
 ng the means of observing the infancy of literary criticism.
 is letter the Marquis has added a collection of his
 is and Maxims.' From the embarrassment he betrays in
 ting to give his correspondent, the Prince Don Pedro of
 gal, an account of the rise of Castilian poetry, it is evident
 es was known on that subject then than at the present day.
 nfounds the Castilian and Limosin; and while he enters
 o investigation of the origin of the former, as apart from
 tter, he begins the history of poetry with Moses, Joshua,
 , Solomon, and Job, and gives an ample account of the
 es which the art of poetry has undergone in the Arragonian
 ces, adding a passing notice of some of the earlier bards of
 a and Portugal. Among the Castilian he names Alphonso X.

and some others, but says not a word of the popular ballads, which are now considered the most valuable of all the remains of the ancient poetry of the Peninsula.

The marquis says of poetry that 'it is an invention of useful things, which, being enveloped in a beautiful veil, are arranged, exposed, and concealed according to a certain calculation, measurement, and weight.' Thus it appears that, in his opinion, allegory was the very essence of poetry. This all-prevalent idea seems to have originated in the monkish cells, where, during the middle ages, those who loved poetry were obliged to combine it with philosophy, in order to secure respect for it among the learned. The allegorical spirit, therefore, which pervades most of the poetry of that era, is connected with its characteristic origin. The Marquis would have laid down premises totally different had he taken the popular and national, instead of the monastic poems of his country, as his standards. These, however, were as much beneath his notice as 'Little Cock Robin,' or 'The House that Jack Built,' would be deemed unworthy of remark in a modern review of our own literature.

The manuscript of the following letter, on a similar subject, by the Marquis of Santillana, is in the Royal Library of Paris, and was never published until it appeared in 'Tesoro de los Prosaadores Españoles por Don Eugenio de Ochoa. 1841.'

'To the most noble Señora Doña Violante de Prados, Countess of Módicos and of Cabrera, Íñigo Lopez de Mendoza, Señor de la Vega.

'MOST NOBLE LADY—Palomar, servant of the House of the count and of your own, has told me that some works of mine have pleased you; and so far as I feel assured that they please you, so far perhaps I believe that they are good; for your very great discrimination does not value anything that is otherwise.

'Most Noble Lady—When that naval engagement took place near Gaeta in the open sea, it happened that there were not very many or very large vessels together on the water.

'Most Noble Lady—I have commenced the work which I have called "Comedieta de Ponza," and have thus entitled it, inasmuch as the poets have invented three ways of naming the subjects on which they speak—namely, tragedy, satire, and comedy. Tragedy is that which embraces the falls of mighty kings or princes—as of Hercules, of Priam, of Agamemnon, and others whose births and lives have begun fortunately and happily, and have been long continued, and afterwards have fallen by some disastrous catastrophe. Seneca the younger, nephew of the elder Seneca, used to speak of these in his tragedies, and so does Juan Boccaccio in his work on the "Falls of Illustrious Men." Satire is that manner of speaking which a poet called Satire had, who reprehended vice, and lauded

virtue. In this manner Horace since used it. . . . That is called comedy of which the beginnings are sad and laborious, and afterwards the midst and end pleasant, joyful, and very fortunate. . . . Terence made use of this ; and Dante in his book, in which he first says that he saw the griefs and pains of Hell, and gladly and fortunately the delights of Paradise afterwards. Concerning this "Comedieta," which I have continued and completed, I assure you, most noble lady, on the faith of a knight, that until this day it has never gone out of my possession ; not but that it has been requested by most noble lords, and other grandees, my friends of this kingdom. I send it to you, lady, by Palomar, together with "The Hundred Proverbs," and some other sonnets, which I have just now finished in the Italian style. Guido Cavalgante first discovered this art in Italy. And afterwards Chicodastuli (Chico de Astuli) and Dante used it, and more than all, Francisco Petrarca, poet-laureate. If any other things, most noble lady, please you that I can do for your honour and that of your House, with infallible delicacy and esteem for you, I beseech you to write to me just as you would to a younger brother. Whose magnificent person and large estate may our Lord have at all times under his protection and guardianship!—From Guadalajara, on the 4th of May, in the year '44' (1444).

JUAN DE MENA.

1412—1456.

Juan de Mena was born at Cordova about the year 1412. As a poet, he ranks somewhat higher than Santillana, though of very inferior merit in other respects. His native city had been recently recovered from the Moors, and seemed particularly adapted for the naturalisation of Castilian genius. Though possessing few advantages of birth or fortune, Juan de Mena at an early age obtained a civil appointment in his native city. The bias of his mind, however, was to the pursuit of philosophy and the study of ancient literature, which led him to remove to the university of Salamanca. Here, unfortunately, he acquired more pedantry than useful knowledge. But, that he might drink at the very fountain-head of learning, he afterwards undertook a journey to Rome, and there prosecuted his studies with the greatest assiduity. On returning to his native country, he was happy enough to attract the notice of King John and the Marquis of Santillana, was received into their literary circle with distinguished approbation, and was nominated by the monarch one of his historiographers, according to the custom, which had been maintained since the time of Alphonso X., for continuing the national chronicles. Of course he was the constant adherent of the king in politics ; and

it is remarked by his biographers that Santillana took him into closer friendship than any other poet that was a royal favourite. At his death, which took place in the forty-fifth year of his age, the marquis erected a monument to his memory.

From the history of De Mena's life, we might naturally expect that his works would be deeply imbued with the Italian taste, and that in his endeavours to extend the boundaries of his native poetry there would be a strong bias towards that of Italy. But he continued stanch to the old Castilian style, perhaps from national pride; and though he followed Dante in allegory, yet he neither introduced into Spain the sonnet, which was still greatly in vogue in Italy, nor did he copy metrical form even from Dante. His most celebrated work is 'The Labyrinth,' or, as it is often called, the 'Three Hundred Stanzas;' an allegorical, historical, didactic poem, written in *versos de arte mayor*. Had it proved what the author hoped, the reign of John II. would have been considered a new epoch in the history of Spanish poetry. But notwithstanding merits which must be admitted to be numerous, it cannot be assigned a higher rank than that of a specimen of Gothic art: it bears no mark of a genius rising above the spirit of the age that gave it birth.

The design of Juan de Mena in this poem was to present an allegorical picture of the whole course of human life; to embrace every age; to eulogise every eminent virtue; to stigmatise every great vice; and to give prominence to the resistless power of destiny. But the inventive genius of the poet was made subservient to his ill-applied learning. The three hundred stanzas are divided into seven orders, to correspond with the seven astrological orders of the planets, to which, according to Mena's doctrine, an all-powerful influence on human destiny has been committed by Providence. In attempting to bring this out in a figurative manner, Mena loses himself, like Dante, in an allegorical world, where a beautiful lady, who represents Providence, appears to him, and becomes his guide. She conducts him to three wheels, two of which are standing still, while the third is in constant motion. These represent the past, the present, and the future. All existing human beings, each having his name and his destiny inscribed on his forehead, are turned round by this centre wheel and dropped. It is astrologically controlled in its revolutions by the seven orders or circles of the seven planets, under the influence of which men are born. It is not clearly stated whether these circles are perceptible on the wheel itself or not. After this description there is a long gallery of mythological pictures arranged in the order of the planets, and presenting abundant evidence of the profound erudition of the poet. This somewhat

grotesque composition, which is tiresome enough, is interspersed with occasional passages of great beauty. The most glowing are those, whether of the lyric, didactic, or narrative class, in which Mena gives utterance to his enthusiastic patriotism. He is particularly happy in his description of the death of the Count of Niebla, a hero of the Spanish navy, who attempted to recover Gibraltar from the Moors, but who, through ignorance of the tidal currents, perished in the waves, refusing to save himself without his men.* But particular prominence is given to Don Alvaro de Luna, the favourite of the king, who is introduced with great pomp under the constellation of Saturn. When the poem was written, De Luna had not yet fallen, and the author appears to have had no practical skill in divination. Reasoning probably, as was natural, from the great energy of De Luna's character, he prognosticates his ultimate triumph over all the hostility that had been raised against him. King John of course is alluded to and eulogised on every suitable occasion; and a genealogy of the kings of Spain forms the conclusion of the poem. Thus was the vanity of the Spanish people flattered, and a kind of national jealousy for the honour of this singular production was created, and subsists to a certain extent even to the present day.

King John, however, did not consider that De Mena had done enough to extol his merits: he thought that the addition of sixty-five stanzas, whose object should be to recall his rebellious nobles to their allegiance, would not only be exceedingly useful in itself, but greatly heighten the beauty and completeness of the composition, by making the number of stanzas to correspond with the days of the year. With critical gravity he signified his royal pleasure to the poet, but the muse was exhausted, and could produce only twenty-four additional coplas!

Except an ode for the poetical coronation of the Marquis of Santillana, most of the remaining poetry of Juan de Mena consists of amatory songs, in the style of the age, and loaded with mythological learning. Towards the close of his life he was engaged in a moral allegory entitled 'Vices and Virtues.' It was designed to be an epic poem, to represent the 'more than civil war' which is raised against Reason by the Will at the instigation of the Passions. But he did not live to complete it.

* This attack on Gibraltar was one of the most notable and disastrous of the reign of John II. The Count of Niebla, Don Henrique de Guzman, perished in it, and his death put an end to the festivities which were occupying the court at that season, at Toledo, affecting all in such wise that nothing was heard but lamentation. This catastrophe happened in 1436.—*Quintana*.

FERNAN PEREZ DE GUZMAN.

1405—1471.

Perez de Guzman belonged to one of the most distinguished families in Castile, and was held in high esteem at the court of John II. As a poet, his peculiarity consisted in the attempt to combine the tone of moral and spiritual poetry with that of the old romances. He wrote a 'Representation of the Four Cardinal Virtues,' consisting of sixty-four strophes in redondillas. But more particular notice of this illustrious author and his writings will be found among the prose writers of the period.

RODRIGUEZ DEL PADRON.

1413—1464.

The family name of this writer is not known; but he received the name Del Padron from the town of Galicia in which he was born. He seems to have been much esteemed by the literati who surrounded King John II. The celebrity he obtained by his poetry was eclipsed by that which arose from his friendship with the Galician poet Macias. The death of the latter, who fell a sacrifice to his romantic susceptibility, so deeply affected Rodriguez, that he took the habit of a Dominican, retired to a convent which he had erected at his own expense, and there spent the remainder of his days.*

JORGE MANRIQUE.

Contemporary with all these authors, and related to several of them, was the family of the Manriques. They belonged to one of the oldest and noblest stocks in Castile, and were at once poets, statesmen, and soldiers. One had been among the stoutest opponents of Alvaro de Luna, and his violent imprisonment had been the occasion of shaking the kingdom to its very foundations. One of his sons has left considerable proofs of the zeal with which he cultivated both poetry and prose; but we hasten to notice the last of this chivalrous and poetic family—Jorge Manrique, a young man of an uncommonly gentle cast of character, yet not

* For a specimen of his verse see page 131.

without the adventurous spirit of his ancestors; and a poet full of natural feeling when his contemporaries were occupied with metaphysical conceits. His principal work, entitled the 'Coplas of Manrique,' written on the occasion of his father's death, is full of simple pathos. The lines on the festive scenes of the court of John II. are considered among the most beautiful:—

'Where is the King Don Juan? Where
Each royal prince and noble heir
Of Arragon!
Where are the courtly gallantries?
The deeds of love and high emprise,
In battle done?
Tourney and joust, that charmed the eye,
And scarf, and gorgeous panoply,
And nodding plume—
What were they but a pageant scene?
What but the garlands, gay and green,
That deck the tomb?

Where are the highborn dames! and where
Their gay attire, and jewelled hair?
And odours sweet!
Where are the gentle knights that came
To kneel, and breathe love's ardent flame
Low at their feet!
Where is the song of the troubadour?
Where are the lute, and the gay tambour
They loved of yore?
Where is the mazy dance of old,
The flowing robes, inwrought with gold,
The dancers wore?

Jorge was killed, while serving on the loyal side, in a skirmish with an insurgent party in 1479. When he fell, there were found in his bosom some unfinished verses on the uncertainty of human hopes!

It would be impossible, within the limits of this work, to give biographical notices of all the poets who basked in the favour of King John, or sang around the tottering throne of Henry IV., to whom his sister Doña Isabel allowed a nominal sovereignty from the year 1465 till his death in 1474. During this period Garci Sanchez de Badajoz sang his glowing and impassioned love songs. The Bachelor Alphonso de la Torre, of whom nothing is now known but what is told in his own writings, lived at this time also, and besides songs, wrote 'The Delightful Vision,' which will fall under our notice in treating of the prose compositions of this period. Meanwhile we believe the works of all these authors

are so much alike, that it will be most suitable to take a general view of them, by noticing the collections in which most of them are to be found.

CANCIONEROS

The Spanish poets of the fifteenth century undertook few works of great extent. Their pieces were generally the expression of a single sentiment, a single image, or a single witty idea, resembling in many respects the songs of the troubadours. They were collected in a work called 'El Cancionero General,' or 'General Song-Book,' which was published in the early part of the sixteenth century. Since that period, it has been frequently reprinted, and has received many augmentations. The earlier editions contain the poems of one hundred and thirty-six known writers, besides numerous anonymous ones; and this collection, with the 'General Romance-book' or 'Romancero General', which appeared somewhat later, may be considered as embracing nearly all the Castilian poetry of the fifteenth century. Fernando del Castillo began his collection with the age of John II., but did not arrange his materials in chronological order. He gives precedence to those of a religious nature; next, he places several poems of the reign of John II., interspersed with others more recent, but fortunately so arranged that the works of each author appear to be kept distinct. Other pieces follow under particular heads, partly by the same, and partly by different authors, whose names are sometimes given, but more frequently omitted. There are also some verses in the Valencian language, and a few Italian sonnets. The pieces that were added from time to time were always placed at the end of the collection.

Who can question the lyric genius of a nation that could produce in one century one hundred and thirty-six song-writers that can be named, besides a large number now unknown? Here the national character is portrayed in genuine colours, and here is a field even more interesting to the philosophic observer of human nature than to the literary critic.

We might have expected that a people whose genius was so poetical should have viewed the simple system of Christianity on the poetic side, and that the religious pieces which form the commencement of the 'Cancionero' would abound with the fervour of devotion, as well as display flights of imagination far beyond the bounds of sober judgment. But far otherwise—even long before the terrors of the Inquisition were known, the freedom of

religious thought and feeling was crushed by scholastic theology; the learned, and not the poetic side of Christianity was that alone deemed worthy of the strains of the fifteenth century; a literal interpretation of the divine record was the only orthodoxy; and the people were tutored into an unqualified reception of every dogma of the church. This rigid adhesion to ecclesiastical rule and form arose partly from the peculiar position of the nation. Throughout the five hundred years in which they had struggled with the Moors, the Spaniards had fought for their faith as well as for their country; had learned, like other Crusaders, to make a parade of their creed; and, as a natural consequence, to observe the greatest formality in all matters connected with religion, to the utter extinction of genuine feeling. Hence the poems adverted to consist for the most part of scholastic definitions and frigid personifications, with miserable attempts to play upon words and even upon letters.

Nor, indeed, are the moral much more meritorious than the religious poems. The pupils of the monastic school had not attained the art, which the ancients possessed, of introducing moral ideas into the region of fancy. They therefore allegorised their virtues and vices according to the catalogue and definitions of the scholastic philosophy; and when observations on human life were made, they were generally pompous and commonplace; though here and there we meet with genuine warmth of feeling, and often with agreeable versification. Even the famous didactic poem of the 'Duties of Sovereigns,' which its author, Gomez Manrique, had the courage to address to their Catholic Majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella, is but a collection of valuable truths in versified prose. The claims of his nephew, Jorge Manrique, to poetic merit are somewhat higher, and his 'Moral Coplas' were afterwards glossed as a national book of devotion, and highly esteemed. The popular character is very manifest here. The moral gravity of the Spaniard has always led him to a high appreciation of rules of conduct and useful maxims; and he has always, in theory at least, set the principles of true moral rectitude above the dictates of mere worldly wisdom.

But amatory songs compose by far the largest portion of the old 'Cancioneros;' and he must have a high appreciation of compositions of this nature who could peruse them throughout. They exhibit, in general, all the poverty of the Provençal poetry with the pomp and power of the Castilian style. This resemblance to the troubadours, however, does not seem to have resulted from imitation, but to have been the natural fruit of that spirit of romantic love which during several ages pervaded the whole of the south of Europe with similar tastes and feelings.

From the time of Petrarch in Italy, it had felt the influence of a purer and more classical taste; but the amatory poets of Spain were by no means so refined; they were passionate rather than tender in the expression of their feelings; the languishing sighs of the Italian became the violent exclamations of the Spaniard, and perhaps no poets have ever equalled the Castilian in describing the impetuosities of love. One very characteristic and truly national peculiarity of these compositions, is the perpetually recurring conflict between reason and passion. The gay and sportive Italian had little anxiety on this subject; but the serious, dignified, and moral Spaniard desired to be wise even in the midst of his folly; and this unseasonable introduction of philosophy gives an unpoetic harshness to the lyrics of Spain, notwithstanding the softness of their melody. Some of the compositions of Juan de Mena exhibit the success of the poets of the fifteenth century, when guided only by their feelings, in gay and graceful love songs. Alonzo de Cartagena, or De Santa Maria, afterwards archbishop of Burgos, has likewise been very happy in painting fervent passion with sportive wit:—

‘La fuerza del Fuego.’

Oh the power of the fire that seizes and burns
My soul and my body, my death and my life!
All, all that it touches it scorches by turns;
It burns, but consumes not—so endless the strife.

Oh what shall I do? no difference I find
In good and in evil, in loss and in gain;
For the fierce flame within has destroyed in my mind
All my former perceptions of pleasure and pain.

I weep and I laugh, I sing and I sigh,
But no effort avails to extinguish the fire;
I care not to conquer, despairing I lie,
What I wish I desire not, nor wish to desire.

To yield or to conquer indifferent I hold,
To offend or to please, to demand or to sue;
Nor do I this moment, if the truth must be told,
Understand what I say to myself or to you.

Pain in Pleasure.

‘Oh labour not, impatient will!
With anxious thought and busy care,
Whatever be thy doom—whate’er
Thy power or thy perverseness—still
A gem of sorrow will be there.

If thou wilt think of moments gone,
 Of joys as exquisite as brief,
 Know, memory, when she lingers on
 Past pleasure, turns it all to grief.
 The struggling toil for bliss is vain,
 The dreams of hope are vainer yet,
 The end of glory is regret,
 And death is but the goal of pain,
 And memory's eye with tears is wet.'

Pedro Sanchez de Badajoz wrote his will in poetry like a loving lover, and availed himself of some passages from the Book of Job to express the depth of his suffering. This strange document is divided into nine readings. In the midst of much extravagance there are passages of considerable poetic merit and good execution. The following pretty little ditty is one of the author's most simple productions :—

'Cantad, todas avecillas.'

'Sing, sing, ye little birds
 In melancholy strain,
 For that shall soothe my pain.

It is not that my heart
 Rebels against my wo;
 The more severe the smart,
 The more intense the throe,
 The more the praise must be,
 To suffer patiently—
 That thought is sweet to me.
 Sing birds of mournful strain,
 For that shall soothe my pain.'

—*Cancionero de 1511.*

Alonso del Padron chose 'the seven joys of love' as one of his themes, probably in imitation of Santillana's 'Seven joys of the Virgin Mary.' He also wrote 'The Ten Commandments of Love,' and it does not appear that this application of Scripture to human passions was then regarded as profane. Yet let the impression of total whimsicality rest on the name of Alonso del Padron. The following should redeem a thousand of his crimes :—

Prayer.

'Fuego del divino rayo.'

'Fire of Heaven's eternal ray,
 Gentle and unscorching flame,

Strength in moments of dismay,
Grief's redress and sorrow's balm,
Light thy servant on his way !

Teach him all earth's passing folly,
All its dazzling art,
To distrust ;
And let thoughts profound and holy
Penetrate his heart,
Low in dust.

Lead him to the realms sublime,
Where thy footsteps tread ;
Teach him, Virgin, so to dread
Judgment's soul-tormenting clime,
That he may harvest for the better time.*

The other kinds of lyric poetry which are scattered throughout the 'Cancionero General' have no distinguishing peculiarity; but those under miscellaneous titles are worthy of particular attention. They display the union of a conventional style with natural feeling, and thus furnish the model of one species of national poetry which has come down to the present age. Certain short lyric pieces, called by the Spaniards *canciones*, or songs, are distinguished by a sententious and epigrammatic character, and a regular metrical form. They consist generally of twelve lines in two divisions—the first four comprehending the idea on which the song is founded, and the following eight the development or application of this idea. There are a hundred and fifty-six of these little songs in the collection, and some of them are the choicest poetry in the book, which is probably owing to the conventional form which set bounds to the romantic verbosity of the age. They were to the Spaniards of that day what the madrigal was to the Italians and French, and the epigram had been to the Greeks in the olden time. Like those of France and Italy, they are generally devoted to some theme of gallantry; and although they do not show so high a polish, yet they often excel them in simplicity, and in the truthfulness with which they paint the character of the age. In a word, they are worthy of being considered as some of the sweetest breathings of the ancient spirit of romance:—

'Fertiliza tu vega.'

'Put on your brightest, richest dress,
Wear all your gems, blest vales of ours !

* *Cancionero de Valencia*, 1511, p. 17. Bowring's *Ancient Poetry of Spain*, p. 267.

My fair one comes in her loveliness—
She comes to gather flowers.

Garland me wreaths, thou fertile vale!
Woods of green your coronets bring;
Pinks of red, and lilies pale,
Come with your fragrant offering.
Mingle your charms of hue and smell,
Which Flora wakes in her spring-tide hours:
My fair one comes across the dell—
She comes to gather flowers.

Twilight of morn! from thy misty tower
Scatter the trembling pearls around.
Hang up thy gems on fruits and flower,
Bespangle the dewy ground!
Phœbus! rest on thy ruby wheels,
Look and envy this world of ours,
For my fair one now descends the hills—
She comes to gather flowers.

List! for the breeze on wing serene
Through the light foliage sails;
Hidden amidst the forest green
Warble the nightingales,
Hailing the glorious birth of day,
With music's divinest powers;
Hither my fair one bends her way—
She comes to gather flowers.'

The *Villancicos* are closely allied to the *Canciones*. The idea which they are founded is expressed in two or three lines, and the amplification of it in one or more stanzas, which are invariably composed of seven lines each. No satisfactory account has been given of the origin of the term *villancico*, but it is supposed to have been ironically adopted from the *mottets* which are chanted during high-mass on Christmas-Eve. Fifty-four of these are contained in the 'Cancionero General,' among which are some of inimitable grace and delicacy. The following is from the pen of Luis Galvez de Montalvo, and the translation by Dr Bowring:—

'Enxuga Filis tus ojos.'

'Oh wipe those weeping eyes, my love!
For time may soothe the pangs you feel,
Which showers of tears will never heal.

Oh if you deem that tears in showers
Can wash away distress, weep on!

Weep on!—the meadow's spring-time flowers,
 The sands upon the shore, are none
 To tears I'll shed—'twere vainly done—
 For time may soothe the grief we feel,
 Which showers of tears could never heal.

Alas! were weeping wise; could tears
 Give sorrow consolation, I,
 Who wrap my woes in silent fears,
 Would weep my heart-strings dry;
 Which, could I do, 'twere vain to try:
 For time may soothe the pangs we feel,
 Which showers of tears could never heal.'

It is to these epigrammatic compositions, whose origin is lost in the darkness of remote ages, that we must attribute the rise of the *poetic gloss* which belongs almost exclusively to the Peninsula. Both the Spanish and Portuguese nations were so much attached to this kind of poem, that they maintained it even after the introduction and general use of the Italian forms in the following century had superseded most of the old ones which were purely national. The poetic gloss has been aptly compared to musical variations. Well known songs or romances were paraphrased or modified into new productions, but in such a manner, that the original composition was, without alteration, interwoven line after line, at certain intervals. The old romances supplied the first materials for glosses; then mottos or sentiments of that gallant character which was peculiar to the age; and at length everything that was capable of being glossed was compelled in turn to undergo this literary torture. The device of an enamoured knight, 'Without thee, I am without God and myself!' was thus glossed by Don Jorge Manrique:—

'I who to myself seem free,
 I who should my passion flee,
 Slave I am to passion's power
 Since I knew thee—luckless hour!
 Without God, myself, and thee.

Without God, for I adore him
 Only at thy beauty's shrine;
Without thee, for thou hast scorned me;
Without self, for I am thine.

Sad my fate that I should be
 Thus a slave to passion's power!
 Since I knew thee—luckless hour!

Without power my love to flee,
 Without God, myself, and thee.*

Before quitting this curious and interesting collection, one feature must be noticed. It contains a number of versified questions and answers, with interpretations of armorial devices and their corresponding emblems. It was the custom for lords and ladies to draw these at festivals, tourneys, bull-feasts, and amusements. But these *jeux d'esprit* generally display more originality than ingenuity.

ROMANCERO GENERAL.

This collection of romances is so nearly allied to the 'Cancionero' already noticed, that we introduce it here, though it did not appear in typographical costume till the end of the sixteenth century. The bulk of the volume consists of romances written in the latter half of the fifteenth century. These had gained the approval of literary criticism and the voice of public favour, to the disparagement of the older romances, before described, which had been handed down from bygone generations. They are filled with compositions, both narrative and lyrical, of the sixteenth century, without any attention to critical arrangement or chronological order; nor, in a single instance, is the name of an author given.† In a history of literature, therefore, it is necessary to speak of the 'Romancero' as a whole; and this is the less inconvenient, because even its later contents exhibit an improvement

* NOTE.

Sin vos, y sin Dios, y mí.

Yo soy quien libre me vi,
 Yo quien pudiera olvidaros,
 Yo soy el que por amaros,
 Estoy desde os conocí
 Sin Dios y sin vos y mí.

* Sin Dios, porque en vos adoro:
 Sin vos, pues no me queréis,
 Pues sin mí ya esto decoro
 Que vos sois quien me tenéis.

Así que triste nací,
 Puesque pudiera olvidaros,
 Yo soy el que por amaros
 Esto desde os conocí
 Sin Dios y sin vos y mí.*

I believe the only attempt at anything like a critical arrangement of these romances has been made by Depping, a German critic, and followed up by Alcalá-Galiano, a learned Spaniard, in the 'Romancero Castellano,' Leipzig, 1844.

merely, without any material alteration of the ancient national style.

This was the age in which anecdotes of the Moorish wars and the gallant adventures of Moslem knights formed the favourite topics of historical romance. As we have already spoken of these, we pass on to glance at the 'Pastoral Romances,' which were produced during the last quarter, or, as some critics affirm, during the last ten years of the fifteenth century. There are no distinct traces of the rise of this kind of poetry in Spain; but it seems to have blended at an early period with the romantic; and some of the most beautiful narratives in the 'Romancero General' are of a pastoral character. It is impossible, however, now to assign a date to these bucolics, nor can any information be obtained respecting the origin of the satirical and facetious songs and tales which are scattered through the volume.

In taking our farewell of these venerable remains of Spanish poetry, it may be satisfactory to say that the two editions of the 'Romancero General' that are referred to by authors, are the one edited by Miguel de Madrigal in 1604, and the other by Pedro de Flores in 1614. Another book under the same title was published in 1604, and contains more than a thousand romances and songs. It is a quarto volume of about seventy sheets, but not one of the romances found in the old 'Cancionero de Romances' appears in it, though it is in other respects very copious. There is no clue, however, to the date, extent, or nature of the earliest collection of these beautiful national relics of song in the sunny land of Spain. As Bouterwek observes in his concluding remarks on this portion of Spanish literature—'Several of their writers richly deserve immortality, though they appear not to have attached much value to renown. If their songs, accompanied by the guitar, affected the hearts and charmed the ears of their auditors, they sought no laurels in addition to that true reward of the poet. Yet for this very reason, in an age when the lowest degree of poetic merit arrogantly claims literary distinction, it would be all the more grateful to do honour to those venerable authors by drawing aside the veil behind which their names have been too long concealed.'

FIRST ESSAYS IN DRAMATIC COMPOSITION.

Instead of those works which are, in the proper sense, called dramatic, and which afterwards formed the most brilliant portion of their poetry, the Spaniards of the middle ages used those *spiritual* or temporal farces which were common in other parts of

Europe, and which can scarcely be said to belong to literature. Through the zeal of the Marquis of Villena, an earlier effort to improve the character of dramatic amusements was made at the court of Arragon than at that of Castile. Allegorical dramas, indeed, do not seem to have been much in favour among the poetical courtiers of John II., notwithstanding their taste for allegory in every other form. A singular combination of pastoral and satirical poetry seems to have indicated the earliest dawn of dramatic genius in the Peninsula.

In the reign of John II., a poet, whose name cannot be ascertained, amused himself by satirising the court of that monarch. He threw his rhymes into the form of a dialogue, and chose as interlocutors two shepherds, from whom the poem took the name of 'Mingo Rebulgo.' It is difficult to conceive how a design so bold as that of converting a pastoral dialogue into a satire occurred to the author, unless the idea of poetry as connected with pastoral life was common in Spain, as it was throughout Italy. It seems probable that in both countries the revival of the study of ancient classical literature gave rise to the practice of clothing modern ideas in a dress imitated from Virgil; and the author of 'Mingo Rebulgo' was first struck with the idea of devoting a work of this kind to the cause of political satire.

About the close of the fifteenth century, pastoral dialogues were converted into real dramas by one Juan de la Encina, a musical composer. This ingenious writer was born at Salamanca during the reign of Isabella; but the precise year is not known. He travelled to Jerusalem in company with the Marquis of Tarifa, and afterwards lived for some time at Rome in the capacity of chapel-master or musical director to Pope Leo X., who, it is well known, afforded great encouragement to dramatic amusements. Both at Jerusalem and at Rome, however, Encina remained truly Spanish in his tastes and feelings; and he continued to write songs and lyric romances in the old Castilian style, without the least mixture of the Italian. He also amused himself with jests, and ridiculous combinations called *disparates* in the romance form. He converted Virgil's 'Eclogues' into romances, and applied to Ferdinand and Isabella the compliments which the Latin poet addressed to the Emperor Augustus. From these he easily passed into the preparation of dialogues, bucolic only in form and name, to be represented before his royal patrons. They are called by himself *representaciones*; the first six, in harmony with the ancient custom, are on sacred subjects, intended for Christmas and Easter; while the remaining five are altogether secular, and are therefore connected with the coming drama of Spain, as the former are a connecting link with the old religious exhibitions. So far as is known, they were the

first compositions that were really acted; and the memorable year 1492 is given by a learned antiquary of the seventeenth century as that in which 'companies began to represent publicly in Castile plays by Juan de la Encina.'

These representations have, however, little dramatic merit. Some have no pretensions to a plot, and none has more than six interlocutors, or any true dramatic structure. They are all in some form of the old Spanish verse; in all there occur passages for singing, and in one there is a dance.*

But the dramatic romance of 'Calisto and Melibœa,' or 'La Celestina,' is that which chiefly merits the attention of those who wish to trace the true origin of the drama among the moderns. It was probably commenced in the reign of their Catholic Majesties, though by some it is referred to that of John II. The reputed author of the first act was Rodrigo de Cota, to whom is also ascribed by some the pastoral dialogue of 'Mingo Rebulgo,' already mentioned. 'La Celestina' was completed and published about the year 1510 by Fernando de Rojas, who has taken care that his name should live as long as the work itself, by recording it in the initials of the introductory stanzas.

The drama, or, as the author himself styled it, *tragi-comedy*, of 'Calisto and Melibœa' consists of twenty-one acts, so that its length renders it utterly unfit for actual representation, according to our ideas of patience and theatricals. As to its intrinsic merit, it possesses little either of poetry or originality of thought. The great object in view seems to have been to warn the young against the seductive arts of vice; and to attain this end, it was deemed necessary to conduct the reader through a series of disgusting scenes, and exhibit in a tragical point of view the termination of an infamous intrigue undertaken by an abandoned woman.

The first act presents a singular picture of the manners and opinions of Castile in the fifteenth century. The stage represents a garden, into which enters Calisto, a handsome young knight, in pursuit of a falcon. Here he finds Melibœa, the daughter of a distinguished noble of the country, and the dialogue opens with these words:—

'Calisto. In this, Melibœa, I clearly perceive the goodness of God.

Melibœa. In what, Calisto?

* One of the greatest literary curiosities in existence is a folio edition of the *Cancionero* of Juan de la Encina, printed at Seville in Gothic characters by two Germans, Peggitzer and Herbst, A. D. 1501. It belongs to the Ducal Library at Wolfenbüttel; and for the neatness and clearness of the type, it is well worthy of the notice of the bibliologist. The dramatic compositions of Encina fill the fourth division.

C. In what? That he has given to nature the power of adorning thee with such perfect beauty, and has vouchsafed to me the high favour of beholding thee, and that, too, in a place so well adapted for the communication of my secret grief. Doubtless the favour which has permitted me to come here is far beyond what could be procured by any services, sacrifices, and devotions. What man was ever, in this life, so glorified as I am this hour? Sure I am that the glorious saints who delight in the vision of Deity are not possessed of more bliss than is now mine in contemplating thee! But, alas! how very different is their case! They enjoy glory, from which they fear no fall, whilst my joy is alloyed by the pangs that await me on thy withdrawal.

M. Do you, then, so highly value this meeting?

C. Truly it is so inestimable, that were God to offer me the most precious blessings of earth, they were worthless in comparison!

M. Should you, however, persevere, I will confer on you a still greater blessing.

C. Oh how fortunate! Do I hear aright the music of thy voice?

M. Unfortunate, rather! as thou shalt soon learn; for the penalty will be as severe as thou hast merited by thy rashness and the audacity of thy speech. How dares a fellow like thee think that a woman like me could trifle with her virtue? Begone! avaunt! Wretch! My patience brooks not the sight of a man so far inflated as to mention to me the delirium of an illicit amour!

After this bitter reprimand Melibœa withdraws, and appears no more during the first act. Calisto remains on the stage with Sempronio his valet, to whom he communicates his despair—gets into a passion with him—chases him off—calls him back. He then describes his beloved, pouring out a torrent of theological and fabulous lore—a vain display, which, like the gross manners of the piece, was the fault of the age rather than of the individual author.

Sempronio endeavours to enliven the scene by his pleasantries, accusing his master of being a heretic, which seems a well-merited charge—

Sempronio. Verily I protest that what you have just said is downright heresy!

Calisto. Why?

S. Because it is opposed to Christianity.

C. What do I care!

S. Are you, then, not a Christian?

C. I! I am a Melibœan: Melibœa I adore; in Melibœa I believe; Melibœa I love.

After an intolerably tedious scene, and sallies of wit not only indecent, but profane, Sempronio at last endeavours to console his master with the hackneyed idea, that his adored is 'but a woman'

—that all women are frail—that all have capitulated—and that in her turn so will Melibœa: and he even goes the length of pledging himself that he will bring matters to the desired issue:—

‘C. But how will you accomplish this notable exploit?’

S. Hear me: for a short time have I known an old hag with a beard; she lives hard by, and her name is Celestina. She is crafty and subtle—an adept in sorcery—and versed in every species of intrigue. Only think: it is said that in this town alone there are no fewer than five thousand young women whose reputation she has either destroyed or restored; nay, if she choose, she could breathe into the very rocks the frenzy of love!’

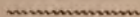
Sempronio is immediately sent in quest of her. He visits Celestina, and sets off with her immediately to join Calisto, whom they find attended by Parmenio, another of his valets. When they see the hag approaching, Parmenio gives free vent to the horror and contempt which is inspired at the sight of her, and Calisto demands his reasons for so much bitterness:—

‘*Parmenio.* That beldam inhabits, in a remote part of the town, a house half in ruins, miserably furnished, loathsome, and solitary, on the brink of a stream. Six different occupations there engage her haggard hands and solitary hours—laundress, perfumer, a dealer in philters and charms, a botcher of lost reputations, a busybody, and, to crown all—a witch. The first is a blind for all the rest. Under pretence of that, you may see numbers of *femmes de chambres* going to her squalid den with linen. With the most scrupulous women she has means at command for obtaining her ends. She chooses the most favourable hours for accomplishing her designs—at early mass, at nocturnal processions, at confessionals, and at all other devotional appointments. Frequently have I seen women in veils enter her abode, followed by barefooted wretches, penitents, men in hoods, who no doubt bent their steps thither to bewail their sins!’

Celestina is at length introduced to Calisto, who hastens to bring the hag the yellow bribe. She, meanwhile, remains with Parmenio, trying to corrupt him; and the dialogue is conducted with much spirit, displaying the skill of Celestina in all its insinuating wiliness. She speaks of her attachment to his mother—hints that the latter had intrusted her with money for him, which she has in safe custody—makes him laugh at her licentious ribaldry—advises him to attach himself to Sempronio rather than to his master, because the great have never any affection for the poor—and lastly, she promises her good offices with Arethusa, whose love he shall possess. After this interlude scene, Calisto returns, fees her, and the act closes. Here, too, the original author stops, his production being already the length of an

ordinary comedy, though scarcely begun. We forbear to follow it further in detail: the arts of Celestina prove but too successful; the valets quarrel with the hag about dividing with them the bribe which she had received; they kill her in the scuffle, and are beheaded for their crime; their mistresses vow vengeance against Calisto as the cause of all; they prevail on some bandits to assassinate him; and Melibœa closes the tragedy by throwing herself from the top of a tower.

Few works have ever had more brilliant success than this drama, or rather dramatised romance. We do not learn that it was ever acted; but it was read by all classes of the people, relished perhaps more on account of the evil it described than for the moral lessons it was designed to convey. The armies of Charles V. diffused it throughout Europe as the *chef-d'œuvre* of Spanish authors. It was transferred to the Italian and French languages, and printed in the original in various countries, to promote the study of its native tongue. Though it has long been condemned on moral grounds, yet the literati of Spain still regard it with pride, as having opened the way for the dramatic career of the other nations of Europe. In another respect it is an object of literary interest. The easy flow of the dialogue affords fair evidence that the fluent and natural style of dramatic conversation, which was attained among ourselves only after much labour and many failures, arose spontaneously in Spain on the first attempt of a gifted author to make dramatic characters speak in prose.



FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PROSE COMPOSITIONS DURING THE
SECOND PERIOD:—HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

In glancing at the prose compositions of this period, the national chronicles first claim our attention, especially as they were compiled, not by monks, as in other European nations, but by courtly and warlike knights, most of whom were poets as well as historiographers. The institution of Alphonso X., by which literary men were appointed to record the most remarkable events of national history, was maintained by his successors;

and beside these royal stipendiaries, other historians and biographers were found who wrote spontaneously, for the sake of doing honour to the parties to whom their chronicles related. Some also there were who seem to have had no motive but the desire of fame: and never, indeed, were historians held in higher estimation than these were during this period in Castile. But notwithstanding the auspicious circumstances which combined to revive the taste for this kind of composition, few of these noble authors rose above the vulgar chronicle style. They took the historical books of the Old Testament as their model; and so rigidly did they adhere to it, that, generally speaking, the only superiority displayed in their chronicles is a better choice of language than that used in the monkish records. Facts are added to facts in long succession by the help of the oft-repeated conjunction *and*: but we search them in vain for anything like adequate or spirited description. There are, nevertheless, some of these chroniclers who seem to have imitated the style and manner of the ancient Greek and Roman historians; at every favourable opportunity they put a short speech into the mouth of their hero, though unfortunately they always couch it in the language of civil law or holy Scripture. After this mode wrote Perez de Guzman, a celebrated poet, and Pedro Lopez de Ayala, grand-chancellor of Castile, still better known than Guzman as a historian, in consequence of his having compiled from former chronicles a consecutive history of the Castilian monarchs of the fourteenth century.

LIFE OF COUNT PERO NIÑO DE BUELNA.

Among the works which in that day passed under the general name of chronicles, there are some biographical memoirs which deserve particular notice. The first is the life of Count Pero Niño de Buelna, one of the bravest cavaliers of the reign of Henry III. It was written about the close of the fourteenth century, probably by Gutiere Diaz de Gamez (1379-1453), standard-bearer to the count. The Gothic taste of the age is abundantly manifest in this early specimen of biography. The chivalrous author opens with an address to the Holy Trinity and the Blessed Virgin; he then proceeds to reason on the nature of virtue and vice in accordance with the schoolmen's notions of morality, before stating any of his facts, or introducing the hero of his narrative. He takes much pains to avoid the dry chronicle style, and endeavours to throw as much romantic interest as

possible around the life of the count, frequently embellishing his story with fabulous tales, and by no means confining himself scrupulously to historical truth. But he describes real events with a spirit to which there is nothing similar in the national chronicles; and so remarkable are some of his descriptions for clearness and accuracy of expression, that they might be attributed to the pen of a modern author, did not the simplicity of the ideas betray the remoteness of the age to which the writer must have belonged. His estimate of the national character of the French will be perused with interest:—

‘The French are a noble nation: they are wise, prudent, and discreet in all that pertains to good education in courtesy and good-breeding. They display much taste in their apparel, and dress richly; they are much attracted by everything that is appropriate and congruous. They are frank and liberal; they delight in giving pleasure to every one; they honour foreigners very highly; they are skilful in giving praise, and bestow it on noble actions with much delicacy, elegance, and freedom. They are unsuspicious; they do not allow their pique or anger to continue long; and they never attack another’s honour in word or deed unless their own be exposed to insult. In their speech they are courteous and graceful, and in conversation, which they encourage much, they are gay and animated. Both ladies and gentlemen are of an amorous disposition, and are proud of being thought so.’

We quote also a curious didactic passage:—

‘When Pero Niño was ten years old, he was committed to the care of a wise and learned man, in order that he might be instructed and trained in all the customs and manners which appertain unto a good and noble gentleman; and in the following manner did his learned tutor instruct him:—

“Son, give heed; as you are of a very high and honourable lineage, and as that wheel of the world, which is never at rest, nor leaves things always in a good state, has descended to you, and of the great makes small, and of the high makes low and poor. To your lot it falls to fight and labour in your appointed place in this realm, and if possible to surpass in greatness and nobility those from whom you are descended; for it is no marvel for a man to be equal to his father in maintaining that estate which he left to him, but it is much credit to surpass all those from whom he has sprung, and to occupy a greater space.

“Son, give good heed to my sayings; prepare your heart by my words, and retain them in it, that hereafter you may understand. It becomes not him who has to learn and use the art of a cavalier that he should spend long time in the school of letters. Take advantage now of that so far as may be—a portion of what time is still left to you will suffice.

... God; and next know thyself; and after
... God by faith: faith is a very firm con-
... Know the substance by the accidents.
... and gave you being. Know God in his
... marvels he hath wrought: learn and know his
... the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and
... therein." . . .

LIFE OF ALVARO DE LUNA.

1423-1452.

The second of these biographical works is the 'Life of Alvaro de Luna,' who was the leading spirit of the reign of John II., from the time when he appeared at court in childhood as a page, till he perished on the scaffold, the victim of his avarice and ambition. The biographer's name is not known with certainty, but it is supposed to be Hernan Gomez de Cibadreal (1388-1452). It is evident that he was in the service of the Constable, and that he wrote soon after the execution of that extraordinary man, with a view to raise a monument to his praise, in spite of the malice of his enemies.* The enthusiasm of the biographer carries him beyond the bounds of historic sobriety and impartiality. But this very enthusiasm imparts to the work a rhetorical charm which is not to be found in the chronicles. Alvaro is described as the most talented, if not the most disinterested man of his day; and every effort is employed to awaken public indignation against the powerful party who compassed his ruin. The pompous declamation which so frequently occurs is the result of the author's zeal; but in what contemporary shall we find equal eloquence? He is not always declamatory, however. His introduction presents much dignity of expression, and the true harmony of Spanish prose, in connection with considerable elevation of thought. We quote a passage:—

"Among the other abundant fruits which Spain in former days was wont spontaneously to produce, I consider that the most precious was, that she brought forth and nourished within her realm many virtuous and famous heroes, disposed to keep possession of their lordly domains; wise to reign over them; hardy and powerful in waging war for their defence; of whom some were raised to the

* Alvaro de Luna was appointed High Constable of Castile by John II. in 1423. He rendered himself odious to the nation by his exactions, and to the nobility by his haughtiness. He was beheaded in 1452.

pinnacle of imperial dignity, others to the resplendent seat of wisdom, and many more, by success in arms, obtained a glittering crown of triumph.'

Nor must we pass by the apostrophe to truth with which the introduction closes, and which contains more poetry than some of the most elaborate verses of contemporary authors:—

'And in attempting to enter upon the present work, I invoke thee, O Truth, who art one of the cardinal virtues that always madest a habitation in my excellent master. I call thee alone to be present with my hand, to enlighten my understanding, and amply to replenish my memory, that I may close and seal the work, as I have begun it, with thy precious name!'

The narrative itself, it must be admitted, occasionally falls into the style of the chronicles: but the spirit which pervades the whole is very superior, and well worthy of remark. The style is accurate and easy, considering the time at which the work was written. In a word, this biography has, in a rhetorical point of view, no parallel among the prose compositions of the age to which it belongs, notwithstanding its occasional declamation and numerous Gothic embellishments.

FERNAN PEREZ DE GUZMAN.

1405-1471.

This noble knight of the king's counsel, and Lord of Batras, was the son of Pedro Suarez de Guzman, chief notary of Andalusia, and of Lady Elvira de Ayala, sister of Don Pedro Lopez de Ayala, the celebrated chronicler. Fernan Perez de Guzman was one of those illustrious personages who, in the fifteenth century, combined the exercise of military prowess with the pursuits of science and literature. He was with King John II. in the battle which he gained over the Moors in 1431, commonly called the battle of Higuera, serving with his corps under his cousin Don Gutiere de Toledo, bishop of Valencia. The king, having returned to Castile, ordered the cavalier to be apprehended on suspicion that, being cousin to the bishop, he was also his accomplice. It was imputed to the prelate that he favoured the designs of the kings of Arragon and Navarre against the Castilian monarch: but the charges against him were not proved, and Perez de Guzman also was set at liberty. There is no record of his being again engaged in any military action, nor does it appear

that he took any part in those disturbances which distracted the kingdom; but it is evident from his writings that he was an enemy of Alvaro de Luna, and that he could ill brook the ascendancy which that minister had gained in the royal counsels. It is equally evident that he disapproved of the views and conduct of the infants and grandees, who were disposed to take violent measures in order to separate the Constable from the command of the court. It appears that, declining to join either party, Guzman retired, either by compulsion or in disgust, to his own estate at Batras, on which account he was not found in the battle of Olmedo in 1445.

It is most probable that he afterwards spent the greater part of his life in that retirement where, profiting by his leisure, he devoted himself to the society of his family, and to the reading of devotional books, as well as to history and moral philosophy. In these studies he was assisted by Don Alonzo de Cartagena, bishop of Burgos, as Guzman himself informs us in the verses which he composed on the death of that illustrious prelate. During his life, he was much celebrated for his poetical compositions, the best of which are the 'Sixty Stanzas' on the art of living well, printed at Lisbon in the year 1564. But undoubtedly that which has rendered him best known to posterity are his prose works, which include the 'Chronicle of King John II.,' and 'The Book of Genealogies and Portraits.' In the latter work we recognise the greater merit, both in the idea, which had then no precedent in Castile, and also in the execution. Had we space, there is no author of this period from whom we could cull more curious and elegant quotations. He wrote this work in 1450, when he did not judge himself prepared with sufficient information for the completion of the chronicle. He afterwards changed his mind, however; and not choosing to interfere with his 'Book of Genealogies and Portraits,' he compiled and arranged what other chroniclers had written, abbreviating what was diffuse, and adding matter which appeared conducive to his purpose. He thus reduced the 'Chronicle' to the form in which it was published, by Dr Lorenzo Galindez de Carbal, by order of the Emperor Charles V. The 'Genealogies' was added as an appendix.

By this title we are to understand a collection of narratives and sketches of the lives, characters, and lineages of several monarchs, and other illustrious personages with whom the author had had an opportunity of becoming acquainted. Here we have portraiture of character executed with dexterity and vigour, yet quite in the way of natural description. The concise, nervous, and animated style, proves that the Castilian language in the

middle of the fifteenth century was, in the hands of a master, capable of more force and weight than might have been expected from its great simplicity. But the author does not indulge in terseness or energy of language at the expense of propriety or even elegance of diction. Nor did he mar his composition with those inversions and that Latinised phraseology which were affected by most of his contemporaries in order to maintain an appearance of superior learning.

With respect to the spirit of the work, it is well known that De Guzman wrote with the impartial severity of a philosopher, who cloaks not the vices even of those whose virtues he extols, and that his portraits are sometimes darkened, though without becoming either unnatural or untruthful, by the feelings of a disgusted courtier, who has had too much reason to form a low estimate of every character identified with political faction. In presenting the English reader with a few passages, we endeavour to translate as literally as possible.

Character of Don Gonzalo Nuñez de Guzman, Grandmaster of Calatrava, who died in 1404.

‘The king of Persia had a book in which were recorded the services which had been rendered him, and the rewards which had been given to those who performed them. And doubtless it was notable and worthy of praise to preserve the memory of noble lineages, and of the services done to the king and the state. Of such services little account is made in Castile. But, to say the truth, there is little occasion, for in this age he is most noble who is most wealthy. Then why keep a book of lineages, since nobility is to be found in riches? Besides, it is not necessary that services should be recorded for the sake of remembering the men who performed them, since kings do not give rewards to those who serve them best, or to those who labour most virtuously, but to those who follow their will most servilely, and minister most to their pleasures.

‘But turning to the great man under consideration: He was a grandmaster, possessed of great courage and ability; highly accomplished, and renowned in arms; a man of no great depth of understanding, and a very pleasant and social person among his friends, for he never knew how to be alone, but was always in the society of friends and companions. He was very liberal; not, however, uniformly, but as he took the fancy, so that he might be called prodigal. And in my estimation this extreme of prodigality, though it may be a vice, is less wicked than avarice, for by the large gifts of the prodigal many are advantaged, and great largeness of heart is manifest. This grandmaster, Don Gonzalo Nuñez, was very much devoted to the fair sex. With such virtues and vices he attained a very high rank and much renown, and had great men in his intimate circle.’

On the Constable of Castile, Don Alvaro de Luna.

'So great and so singular was the reliance which the king had upon the Constable, and so great and so excessive his power, that there has seldom been known any king or prince so much feared and obeyed in his own kingdom as was Alvaro in Castile; nor could he have had more unlimited sway over the government and administration. And so much was his power enlarged, and so much the effective power of the king contracted, that from the highest post in the kingdom down to the most trifling favour, very few came to ask anything of the king, or to thank him for anything; but the Constable was petitioned, and he also was thanked. . . . In conclusion, there are here two very marvellous points to be noticed: the first, a king ordinarily wise in many things, and yet in every respect negligent and remiss in the government of his kingdom; being neither stimulated to it by his own discretion, nor by the experience of many troubles which he suffered through the conflicts and revolts that took place in the realm; nor moved by the admonitions and advices which were given him by the grandees, knights, and clergy; nor, what is more, by the natural vigour and energy of his character, that should have disinclined him thus to submit on every point to the dictum of the Constable with more obedience than even an humble son to his father, or an obedient devotee to his abbot or prior. . . . The second point of marvel—that a gentleman without connections should attain to such wonderful power in a kingdom so great, in which there were so many and so powerful nobles, and in the reign of a king so little feared and obeyed. We are ready to say that this was through the power of the king; but how could he give that authority to another which he held not himself? or how is the lieutenant obeyed when he who puts him in his place cannot obtain obedience? Verily, I think that there cannot be given any clear reason for this, unless one could also explain that which made the condition of the king so strange; nor can a cause be shown for the power of the Constable; and I know not which of these two things is subject of greater wonder—the despised condition of the king, or the influence of the Constable. And in the time of this King John II. occurred many things in Castile more strange than worthy of remembrance, or advantageous to the kingdom. But so it was, that after the death of Ferdinand of Arragon* there was neither peace nor concord in the kingdom of Castile.'

* Uncle of John II., and regent during his minority.

FERNANDO DEL PULGAR.

Flourished about 1492.

Fernando del Pulgar, secretary, counsellor, and chronicler to their Catholic Majesties Ferdinand and Isabel, was a native of the kingdom of Toledo, the true place of his birth being supposed to be between Toledo and Pulgar, whence he derives his appellation. Though the city of his parents is unknown, it is presumed that his education was conducted at the court of John II. and Henry IV., where he became acquainted with many prelates and gentlemen whose lives he afterwards undertook to write. When Henry IV. came to the throne, Pulgar was already a person of some consideration; and it is supposed that during the latter years of this reign he held the office of secretary of state, and in that capacity began to serve their Catholic Majesties immediately on their accession to the throne. By them he was intrusted with several important commissions, and among others with an embassy to the court of France. After his return to Castile, he resided at court for some time as a counsellor, and then retired from the inquietude of public life, hoping for rest and leisure in his country mansion. But he was recalled, by order of the queen, in 1482, to write the chronicle of the Moorish kings then reigning in Andalusia; and it may be considered certain that from that time Pulgar constantly followed her majesty in her various expeditions. He was thus enabled to record as an eye-witness most of the important events which took place in Spain till the conquest of Granada in the year 1492. The most highly-appreciated works of Pulgar, however, are the 'Claros Varones,' or 'Eminent Men of Castile,' and his Letters to the queen and other eminent persons. His style is animated, concise, and witty without piquancy. It is characterised by elevation without pomp, and elegance without affectation. His descriptions are rapid and graphic, but always so independent, that the good and the evil are impartially exhibited. He has no superfluous words or useless reflections; he paints with one stroke, and never retouches. We should say that, of all the Castilian writers of his age, he relates the gravest matters with the greatest delicacy, and the most important with the greatest elegance. He portrays his characters strongly, but without adulation on the one hand, or acrimony on the other; and the contrasts which he so opportunely introduces became, as it were, the *chiaroscuro* which gives brilliancy to his pictures.

In his letters he seems to enjoy more freedom, and interweaves

with them many salutary maxims, both moral and political, which thus give a practical value to the philosophy of his counsels. It has been observed that F. del Pulgar teaches more of the science of human nature than all the previous historians of Spain put together.*

Character of Henry IV. of Castile.

'Claros Varones.'

'This prince lived in the city of Segovia, apart from his father, during the greater part of his minority, and indulged in pleasures which youth is apt to demand, but which prudence ought to deny. There was no restraint upon him, and he was too young to restrain himself. . . . He was a pious man, and had no wish either to injure any one himself, or to see an injury done; and so humane was he, that it was difficult for him to order the execution of justice on criminals, or to enforce the penalties of civil law which were necessary to the government of his kingdom. Sometimes he was indolent, and there was difficulty in overcoming his disinclination for business, because appetite was mistress of reason. He never manifested the least haughtiness either in word or deed; or covetousness in obtaining large domains by base or dishonourable means. If at any time he was angry, it was but for a short time, and his wrath never lasted so long as to injure either himself or any one else. . . . He was a great musician, and had much taste in singing and playing, as well as gracefulness in speaking on general subjects; but in the execution of matters of important and necessary business, he was sometimes negligent; for his thoughts were occupied with his accustomed pleasures, and these hinder the exercise of judgment in any one that is carried away by them. And certainly we hear some men talk very well, praising virtue, and condemning vice, in a general manner; but when a particular case presses on themselves, then, overcome by interest or pleasure, they neither persist in the virtue which they praised, nor resist the vice which they condemned.'

Character of Don Iñigo Lopez de Mendoza, Marquis of Santillana.

'Claros Varones.'

' . . . He was an acute and ingenious man, and equally satisfied to be engaged in things great or small. In the control of his appetites and the rationality of his conversation he showed himself to be a man of native superiority of mind. He spoke well, and was never heard to utter a word which might not have been sent to press, or noted down either for instruction or amusement. He was courteous and

*The first edition of the 'Claros Varones' was published in Seville in 1500. The volume includes some of his letters; but a complete impression was made at Alcalá in 1598. We follow a still more correct edition of Madrid, 1775.

affable to all that approached him, and especially to men of learning. He was a powerful warrior: before an action, he was prudent and temperate, and having entered upon it, he was bold and daring. Nor was his daring without circumspection, nor his prudence mingled with cowardice. In like manner he governed with great judgment the men-at-arms under his command; and well understood how to be both their captain and companion. Nor was he either haughty on account of his exaltation, nor low in the choice of his company; for within himself he had a humility which made him a friend of God, and outwardly he preserved such authority as rendered him respected among men. And exhibiting in his countenance a gracious liberality, he was beloved by the soldiers, and yet, fearing to offend him, they strictly obeyed his orders in battle.

Letter to Pedro de Toledo, Canon of Seville.

(It is without date, but was probably written in 1478.)

... 'At present there are no news that I can write you; for in the time of good kings justice is administered; and justice produces fear, and fear prevents excesses; and where no excesses are, there is tranquillity; and where there is tranquillity, there are no outbreaks, which give rise to war, and occasion calamities. Hence my unexpectedly good news; though the evil spirit of Spain, restless and unquiet, seems to desire, if possible, to conjure appearances in the air which might produce war at home, since there is none from without. He knew what he was saying who described the Spaniards as daring in war, and in peace idle and turbulent. We give thanks to God that we have a king and queen, of whom you need only be told that they have no favourite; the having which has been the plea, and indeed the cause of discontent and disobedience in the kingdom. Know, then, that the favourite of the king is the queen, and the favourite of the queen is the king; and these hear, and judge, and will what is right, which hinders and destroys discord. . . . Do you ask how you should address me now? Know that they call me Fernando, and shall call me Fernando, and should they confer on me the grandmastership of Santiago—still Fernando; for by that title and honour do I wish to pass through life,* because no one can deprive me of it, and also because I believe that no title can confer virtue on him who has it not of his own.'

* Literally—'to drive my mule.'

DIDACTIC AND EPISTOLARY PROSE.

ALPHONSO MARTINEZ DE TOLEDO.

1385?—1449.

It is presumed, though not certain, that this writer was born at Toledo, as it is well known that it was customary for the graduates of any faculty to receive as an honour the name of their birthplace as a second appellative. Neither is the year of his birth known; but if it be taken into account that he himself published, in the year 1432, his book 'Against the Common Report and Opinion that is falsely entertained concerning the Fates, Fortune, Signs and Planets,' we cannot be far wrong in presuming that he was born about the year 1385, or somewhat later. Of this work we cannot offer any extracts, as no copy is within our reach. The learned Perez Bayer refers to two editions of it—one of Legrono, 1529, in folio, and another of Seville, 1547, in octavo.

Of the same dates, both as to time and place, are the rare editions of the 'Corvacho,' or 'Book of Artful Women,' which are quoted by Don Nicolas Antonio. The full title of the 'Corvacho' is 'Libro de los Vicios de las Malas Mujeres é Complexiones de los ombres, Segun Algunos llamado Corvacho,' and the author tells us in the introduction that he was a chaplain of King John II., which is all that is known of his biography.*

'Corvacho.'

Chap. xviii., Part I.

'Another reason still do I urge why you should not indulge in the passion of love. Learning and its advantages are lost so soon as the man of letters abandons himself to inordinate affection. But it is very much to be doubted whether the learned man who thus indulges himself be at all wise, since he esteems it luxury, and

* Besides these editions of the 'Corvacho,' Mendez in his 'Tipografía Española' mentions other two of Toledo in 1499 and 1518, but the first of these is supposed to be the same as the one which belongs to the valuable and curious library of M. Enrique Ternaux-Campan, from which the accompanying extract is taken by Ochoa. Don Nicolas Antonio attributes also to this author the 'Atalaya de las Cronicas;' and others ascribe to him the 'Invencionario,' but both were most probably written by Alphonso de Toledo.

cannot refrain from its enjoyments. But most especially do I wish to impress upon your mind that those most devoted to the pursuit of knowledge become more foolish and less able to extricate themselves when once involved than the simple and ignorant. Who ever heard of any man in the world so distinguished as Solomon, without equal in learning and knowledge, yet committing the most extraordinary acts of idolatry through the influence of his concubines? Look at Aristotle also, one of the learned sages of the world, suffering a bridle to be put into his mouth, and a saddle upon his back like a brutish ass, and his mistress to mount upon it, and give him ample allowance of the lash on the antipodes of the seat of knowledge! Who, then, that is wise ought not to avoid love as the plague, knowing that it made the sagest king an idolater, a slave, and a madman; and brought the most learned philosopher to prostrate himself on all-fours for the purpose of amusing a foolish woman? Let those who are smitten with this sudden passion only note this, and learn what I would have them avoid. Again—who has not heard of Virgil, a man of so much penetration and knowledge that never was there such another known, and you may verily read and know that in Rome he was suspended at the window of a tower, in sight of all the people, in order to indicate that his knowledge was so great that no woman on earth could deceive him. And she who did deceive him resolved to do so on account of this vain presumption; and as she determined, so certainly did she deceive him, for wickedness has no deed on earth too difficult for a woman to compass! But herein I would guard men against supposing that they must be deceived, and I wish to show that if a man will, he may avoid deception, though St Augustine doubts it. A man having perfect confidence in himself, may at times appear to put confidence in a woman, allowing her to imagine that she is deceiving and conquering him, in order to gratify her. In this the fault is rather his want of firmness than his want of knowledge. In consequence of such indulgences, women would sometimes try to please, and glory in the wickedness. But we cannot mention all the tricks which they have learned, do learn, and will daily learn, through being too fondly loved. Afterwards the aforesaid Virgil did not leave his mistress without repentance; for in one hour he extinguished all the fires in Rome by his magic art; so that all had to come to her to light their fire; and as the fire that one lighted did not kindle that of another, so every one had to come to light his own in her dwelling of shame; and all this was done in revenge for the disgrace she had brought on the celebrated sage.'

HERNAN GOMEZ DE CIBDADREAL.

1338—1457.

For the reason given in the case of Martinez de Toledo, it has been supposed that the birthplace of this famous writer was Cíbdadreal, the capital of La Mancha; but Ochoa rather imagines that he was born about the Castilian court—Lopez de Ayala, the high chancellor and chronicler, having certainly been his godfather. Having taken the degree of bachelor in medicine at the age of twenty-four, he became physician to John II., to whom he was much indebted, as he was also to the favourite minister, the unfortunate Alvaro de Luna. Neither in his own age is there any mention of the life and writings of this bachelor, nor should we even now have had any record of his existence, had not his letters been printed at Burgos in 1499,* under the title of 'A Hundred Letters of the Bachelor Hernan Gomez de Cíbdadreal, Physician of the very Powerful and Sublime King Don John, the Second of this Name.' This collection had become very rare, when the learned Don Eugenio Llaguno y Amirola published a new edition, corrected and illustrated.† There are one hundred and five of these letters, and they are valuable as containing the secret history of the author's times. It was a turbulent and calamitous age, and yet one of the most interesting in Spanish history, on account of the great number of illustrious persons who figured in it.

Letter LXXXIX., to Don Juan de Zerezuola, Archbishop of Toledo, dated 1441.

....'Sentence has been passed against the Constable. The grandees cannot tolerate a rival of the king; and Count de Castro, who is his determined enemy, since the governor Pedro Manrique died, is now with great eagerness treating of a match between the king of Navarre and the Admiral's daughter: and also of one between the Infant Don Henrique and the sister of the Count of Benavente; for it is deemed good policy to unite these grandees closely, in order that the party who seek the destruction of the Constable may not be overpowered. You are wise, and will give these matters due consideration. I say to you that the Constable ought to do as the clown who could not pull the tail out of the horse all at once, but hair by hair he plucked it out without trouble.

* There are grave reasons for believing that these letters were but a forgery, however talented and agreeable, and it is by some considered doubtful whether such a person as Cíbdadreal had any existence.

† Madrid, 1765.

I am not much annoyed by any of these things, but adroitly manage every one.'

This has been selected as a fair specimen of the style and tone of our author. He manifests the wary doctor throughout, while abundantly supplying his correspondents with gossip—that favourite commodity, which has never somehow been retailed in quantities so small that the scruple is required in weighing it.

MOSEN DIEGO DE VALERA.

1402—1487.

The city of Cuenca was the native place of the stanch and circumspect Cavalier Diego de Valera, and the year 1402 was that of his birth. He was brought up from infancy in the court of John II. of Castile, where, in the capacity of page to Prince Henry, he served in the palace, and received his education. Desirous of exercising his courage, and attaining accomplishments of a kind which could not be acquired in the listless and uniform life of a courtier, he left Spain, and travelled over a great part of Europe, observing in its different courts whatever seemed worthy of attention. He first visited France, when Charles VII. was the reigning monarch. Thence he passed to Vienna, then the court of Duke Albert of Austria, with whom he had the honour of supping. On this occasion he had the fortitude to repel, both with vigour and judgment, an expression which, over the table, was uttered by an Austrian magnate in contempt of the royal standard of Castile, for which noble and chivalrous conduct King John, soon after hearing of it, honoured him with the title of *Mosen* (Mr), to denote peculiar personal distinction. In the same year, which was 1436, Valera followed the army of Duke Albert, in which he served as an adventurer in the war against Bohemia. Having returned to his own country in 1440, and the fame of his valour and dexterity in arms having placed him among the bravest Spaniards of his time, King John selected him as his champion against Pierre Chérnoy, a vassal of the Duke of Burgundy, who had challenged to single combat, according to the custom of that age. He was afterwards found at Cuenca, where he was probably living in retirement, and received a secret commission from the king to pass over to the court of France, and negotiate his marriage with a daughter of Charles VII. Besides this confidential embassy, he fulfilled with success several other honourable commissions at the courts of England, Burgundy, and Hungary.

After the completion of these journeys, which did not occupy any great space of time, nothing is known of the life and employments of Valera till the year 1448, when he was nominated procurator of the city of Cuenca by the Cortés which King John convoked at Tordesillas. In this assembly he distinguished himself by the cool courage with which he opposed the bloody designs, suggested by the king, for reducing the rebellious grandees with fire and sword. Valera advised measures of peace and clemency, and offered strong arguments against these destructive measures, which the other procurators, either through fear or flattery, had seemed to approve. And so far was he from fearing the anger or vengeance of the Constable, Don Alvaro de Luna, the cause of these discontents, that he afterwards reiterated his pacific counsels in two letters to the king, in which he adduced various maxims and examples against the effusion of human blood. Besides the respect which his patriotic zeal commanded, he had on this delicate occasion considerable protection from the position he held in the service of Don Pedro de Stuñiga (Zuñiga), Count of Placencia, who, confiding in his superior endowments and tried prudence, had intrusted to him the education of his nephew and heir.

As soon as their Catholic Majesties came to the throne, Mosen Diego de Valera was deemed a suitable person to act as their chronicler and counsellor; and soon afterwards he received the further honour of being nominated high chamberlain. The wisdom and valour of this politic diplomatist and redoubtable cavalier procured for him immortal fame among the illustrious persons who flourished in Spain in the fifteenth century. His lengthened life included three reigns, in which he was eye-witness of the varied events of those stormy times. In his capacity of royal historiographer he composed the 'Abbreviated Chronicle of Spain,' dedicated to the queen. This work was finished in the year 1481, being the seventy-ninth of his own age. He survived its completion but a very short time.*

This narrative displays extensive reading, without criticism, selection, or solidity. It is succinct and meagre enough till it reaches the reigns of Henry III. and John II., where we find much more substance and truthfulness. The style, however, is dry, tedious, and slovenly, offering no passage which seems worthy of selection and translation. But the author has fortunately inserted in his chronicle the two letters above-mentioned, which he addressed to the king, to warn him of the inevitable ruin that would fall upon his vassals should he persevere in gratifying his rage, and endeavouring to conquer the malcontent grandees by

* This compilation was first printed at Saragossa in 1494; second, at Salamanca, in 1499; and third and fourth, at Seville in 1534 and 1567 respectively.

force of arms. These letters are both written in a grave, precise, and sententious style, and in a frank and independent tone, sustained by a generally-elevated diction, and occasionally enlivened with beautiful similes, or strengthened by the exhibition of melancholy pictures, which, notwithstanding their somewhat studied appearance, prove that Valera could feel as well as think, and paint what he felt.

Letter of Moscu Diego de Valera to King John II. of Castile. (Dated at Segovia.)

***MOST POTENT SOVEREIGN**—Your realms are in such a state of anxiety, distress, and turmoil as I need not describe, since it is sufficiently known to your majesty. And now it is more necessary to seek a remedy than to deplore and talk of our misfortunes; and doubtless, after God, in you alone have we hope. Oh, my lord, let not, then, our hope be vain, and let peace be made by your decree! Use now your great power to this end, and thus you will secure greater glory than any prince in the world ever attained. This may be done, my liege, by putting all actions in a just balance—laying aside partiality and favoritism, whence necessarily flows so much discord among your subjects. By you alone can these evils be repaired, and they be restored to peace; and though it appears difficult to some, yet to me it appears very light and easy, if you only will it, because you are sovereign lord, as well of one party as of the other.

*Call to recollection, my lord, that you are king; and look well to it as your peculiar office, since, if properly understood, to govern well is more a burden, I assure you, than a pleasure, which certainly the Persian king, whom Valerius mentions, well understood—who, taking the crown into his hands on the day of his coronation, and viewing it with much attention, said, “Oh precious joy, only when fortunate! Who can thoroughly understand the great anxieties that are concealed under thee! If I might have found thee on the ground, I would not have lifted thee!” In like manner oughtest thou to examine how thou rulest for God in the earth, whom thou shouldest much resemble. He who, with restless thirst and ardent desire for human safety suffered so many injuries, and even endured a painful death. It is no wonder if you, who have such authority in the world, should suffer some trouble or anguish for the salvation of your people, for all these things are incident to power and rule. And fortune frees no one from accident or wound, from him who holds the most exalted seat, and dresses in purple and gold, to him who sits on the ground, and covers his nakedness with unbleached linen.

*Your majesty should likewise remember that among other magnificent titles, kings are called **FATHERS** of the nation. This is in order that they may know the nature of the power given to them, and that they may understand how to use it aright; resembling good

fathers, who at times chastise their beloved sons with words, at other times with stripes, but very seldom does it happen that they slay them, unless constrained by extreme necessity. And just in such a light ought you to look upon princes and subjects so closely united. You are in such a relation to each other as the various members of the human body; and just as no member of the body can be injured without pain and injury to all its other members, in like manner can no subject be destroyed without great loss and injury to the prince. Then look at your majesty. If things go on as they have begun, how many members must be cut off? And these being cut off, oh tell me, my liege, in what condition will they leave the head!

The other work of this author which claims our attention is his 'Treatise concerning Providence as Opposed to Fortune;' a short discourse of eight pages quarto, 'composed for the reading, regulation, and counsel of Don Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena.' There is nothing new in the ideas, but the advices contained in this politico-moral treatise have some originality. The diction throughout is more frigid and surcharged with authorities than that of the letters. When we take into account that, both in the chronicle and in the treatise, Valera was coolly putting truths together on paper, without any exciting object in view, but that in his letters he was powerfully agitated by the fear of threatened calamities, and stimulated by love and compassion to his fellow-countrymen, to use his utmost effort to avert the evil, we cease to wonder at finding some compositions so tame, and others so spirited, proceeding from the same pen.

ALPHONSO DE LA TORRE.

Flourished about 1440.

Nothing is known with certainty of the lineage, birth, death, studies, or employments of this writer. He flourished about the middle of the reign of John II. of Castile, and probably resided at the court of John I. of Navarre, afterwards king of Arragon also. His writings announce that he was a bachelor, being content with this lower degree of the university according to the custom of the time. From the nature of his writings, it is likely that his bachelorate was connected with philosophy or jurisprudence rather than with any other faculty. The estimation in which he was held at the court of Navarre led to his receiving a commission to compose a philosophical treatise on moral and political subjects for the instruction and amusement of the Prince Don Carlos, heir-

apparent to the crown. The novelty and beauty of the manner in which he executed the task fully confirmed the high literary character which he had already attained. This work seems to be imitated from Severino Boecio, feigning a dream, in order the better to expound his doctrine. It is entitled 'The Delightful Vision,' and is dedicated to the Chancellor of Navarre, tutor and lord-chamberlain to Don Carlos, as it appears it was undertaken at his request. It is an allegorical vision, in which the author sees the human understanding in the form of an infant brought into a world full of sin and ignorance, but educated by a succession of such personages as Grammar, Logic, Music, Astrology, Truth, Reason, and Nature. The writer designed it to be a compendium of all human knowledge, especially that which relates to moral science and man's duty, the soul and its immortality. Consequently it displays a good deal of the learning of the time, and still more of the metaphysical subtilty then in favour. In general the language is sufficiently fluent and elegant, but it falls short of the fulness and variety which the Castilian had already acquired. The author betrays considerable leaning to the transpositions of words contrary to the natural Spanish construction; nor did he always avoid the vice of interlarding the vernacular with Latin, though he offends less in this respect than most of his contemporaries. In whatever light, however, the merit of its diction may be viewed, the work has always been cited as one of the monuments of the elegant prose of the fifteenth century. The author intimates to the chancellor that it is a bold thing in him to have discussed such subjects in the vernacular, and begs him not to permit a work so superficial to be seen by others. It was probably for this reason that the original manuscript was kept under guard in a chamber of the royal palace. Some learned men obtained copies with difficulty, 'moved by the great profit, as well spiritual as temporal, that might be imbibed in the perusal of such doctrine.' It obtained considerable popularity, and several editions appeared between 1480 and 1540. It was doubtless from some early copy that Domingo del Fino, a noble Venetian, made the Italian translation which he published and sold as an original of his own; and so entirely did the taste for visions pass away in Spain during the following century, that when Del Fino's work was translated back into its native Spanish (in 1663), it was received as a work till then unknown in Spain. We subjoin a brief specimen:—

'The door being open, the Understanding most gladly entered, and instantly afterwards came Truth and Reason, took him by the hands, and began to lead him through the garden of delight. Truth was

clad in a vestment more precious and sumptuous than mortals can estimate. So great was the certainty her sentiments conveyed, that it was impossible for a rational man to deny them. So great was the friendship and benevolence of her aspect, that it was blessedness sufficient to look upon her countenance. Her stature was limited and proportioned to the dimensions of Understanding. Her words were so certain, and left so much confidence in the heart, that neither doubt nor fear of contrariety remained. In her right hand she held a mirror of diamond, set in a multitude of pearls and precious stones; and in her left she held a well-regulated balance of fine gold without any alloy.

Reason was very like her, except that she had garments very much more showy, though not of greater value. But there was one marvellous thing about Reason: sometimes she appeared so tall, that her head reached to the sky; at other times to the clouds; and again she seemed in size equal to the human form. Her eyes appeared stars; her hair gold; and her cheeks two sister mirrors, rather than other corruptible matter.

Understanding was so delighted with beholding them, that he turned not his eyes to any other object. And they seeing him absent, and as if half-stupid and bewildered, asked him to look at their habitation and garden, which, through their own fault, was untrodden by mortals.

Understanding gave heed, and saw delights incredible and innumerable. In that place there was no night, but all was clear day, and the sun seemed to shine with seven times more splendour than his wont, without obstacle or impediment of clouds. And so temperate was the heat, that it was agreeable to all the senses, and delighted them in a mild and pleasant manner; and so admirably was the brightness adjusted, that there was enough without excessive dazzling. The centre was arable land, and the trees of that garden were so fruitful, so odoriferous, so beautiful, and bore fruits so pleasant to the taste, that they gave refreshment both to the intellect and the senses. All deformed or noxious herbs were rooted out of that place. In their stead were planted those that were beautiful and balsamic, and of these the soil of that delightful garden was full. All noxious, ferocious, and unsightly animals were banished thence, and song-birds filled the place with angelic melody. In the midst of the garden was the tree of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil. At its root welled out a fountain through tubes of purest silver, and the place on which it distilled was all of pearls, sapphires, and rubies; and the tree bore fruit to dispel hunger for ever, and the water had the virtue to quench ever-during thirst, and, besides, bestowed blessed and everlasting life. There was neither infirmity, nor decay, nor death, nor sadness, nor sorrow of any kind; but life, health, and joy, with abundance and perfection of riches without diminution and without disappointment.

Nor was persecution there, the fiend of malignity; nor poisonous tongues; nor fraternal discord; nor insatiable avarice; nor despised

poverty; nor infirm old age, trembling and sad; nor the ignorance and imbecility of infancy; nor the rash pride of youth; nor vain hope; nor trembling fear. Nothing was wanting that could be named. All was concord and charity, all benevolence and friendship, whence all things proceed that are virtuous, laudable, and rightly ordered.

'And after Understanding had seen all these things in succession, the damsels asked the occasion of his visit. And he answered them, that he had an inexpressible desire to know what was the final cause for which man had been made. For it appeared to him that the final cause was better than any of the other causes—namely, natural, formal, and efficient; and he begged of them that they would, in their condescension, assure him of that in the clearest manner possible; for according to his judgment, so many were the deformities and the abominations found among men, that they appeared to him not to have been made for any end of a spiritual kind, or different from the other animals; besides, greater disorder might be found among men than among the lower animals, and yet it was told him that God had the retribution of good and evil; and he confessed that he did not believe it, because he saw the contrary: for he saw the just suffer punishment, and die oppressed, and the wicked rewarded, by living honoured, wealthy, and beloved: he saw them also die in the same state.' . . .

THE CATHOLIC QUEEN ISABELLA.

1450—1504.

In concluding our notices of Spanish literature prior to the sixteenth century, we may remark that there are extant two letters, said to be original manuscripts, from the pen of the celebrated Queen Isabella, consort of Ferdinand V., and patroness of Cristoval Colon. Both are addressed to the venerable Fr. Hernando de Talavera, archbishop of Granada, confessor to her majesty. In the first, dated Saragossa, 4th December 1492, she expresses her humble veneration for his wisdom, and implores its continued guidance. In the second, from Barcelona a few weeks later, she professes her Christian contempt for worldly happiness, and her tender affection for the Catholic king, her spouse, who had recently received a wound from a madman at Barcelona. In translating a few passages from the former, we have deemed it necessary to suppress part of the useless verbiage and repetition with which it is encumbered and obscured: and we do not present it to the reader as a choice specimen of the epistolary composition of the age, but as a fragment curious in itself, and interesting as the production of this extraordinary woman:—

that in your letters, that it is presumptuous for me to say that I am not capable, neither do I know how to estimate how much they profit me. And I know certainly that they gave me life, and that you would still more extend them, and be more desirous of everything, and about the affairs in which I may be interested, such as that now in hand with the king of Portugal about the islands which Columbus discovered. And about the marriage of our children, what would appear to you of the princess, it is not necessary to take account, she is determined never to marry; and my lord the king is not so much ago that he will not command her to do it; and at that time I was not for interfering with her inclination. I am not only in these matters, which are the greatest, but in the government of our realms, and the good government of them, I have desired these many days to write this to you, and because it appeared to me that you would decline to write me such counsel. And now I remember that you say I have not written to you of the Indies. What I could write on these things might not be valuable to you. Of that and many other things I have written and consulted you, but for the anxiety I have about wishing to say so many things; and having so little time, I might confound my meaning in a manner that would not at all convey what I would say in a larger space; and I omit much of what I wished; and what I do say I have done very coarsely. If I had time, there is no occupation in which I would take greater pleasure than in writing to you; and I shall be content if I think that you bear without pain my letters to you, though they proceed in such an irregular manner. And from this time, whatever I cannot give you in my own hand, shall be made known to you by Fernan Alvarez—that is, all the principal events that take place, in order that we may know your mind in them.

“And this I do greatly beseech you, that you will not refuse to write your opinion on everything. And refuse not because you are not in the matters, and are absent; for I well know that the counsel of one absent will be better than that of another present. And there is no one, present or absent, who would know how to recommend peace by such weighty reasons, or so wisely to teach the thanks which we should give to God for that and other mercies received—which may God of his bounty grant that we may do!—nor that could in such wise also reprove concerning what may be reprehensible in the irregularities of the feasts.* These are well spoken of by every one, and my inclination leans much towards them; what I say you may reprehend—I say it reverently, and do not wish to appear to exculpate myself.

* The presence of Isabella in the Spanish camp gave animation to several of the military expeditions of Castile; and she enlivened the totem of the campaign by jousts, balls and other brilliant festivities, over which she presided in person.

“But as it appears to me that they have said more concerning the feast than was the case, I will tell you what took place, in order to know in what I have erred. As you say that “some one danced who ought not,” I think perhaps they have said that I danced; but it was not I, nor did the thought occur to me, nor could such a thing be forgotten by me. The new masks I neither wore, nor yet my ladies, nor even the new dresses. All the dress I have worn here I have had since we were in Arragon, except one dress which I made of silk, and for three marks of gold, the very plainest that can be; this was all my finery.

“Concerning the gaieties and lightness of the ladies of my court, until I saw your letter I never knew that there had been any excess; nor even yet do I know that such was the case, but that they had guardians, as is their wont when they go into public. The French supping at their tables is quite a usual thing, and cannot be cited as an instance (of lightness). Whenever the (auxiliary) princes eat with our majesties, their followers join the table of our ladies and gentlemen, so that the ladies are never alone. And this has been practised by the Burgundians since the time of the Bastard, and by the English and Portuguese, and hitherto also by ourselves, at similar convivialities; and was not done with any more evil intent than that of those who eat at your own table. I tell you this because it was no new thing, or a thing in which we thought of there being any harm. But if it is wrong, custom cannot make it right, and it had better in future be disused.

“The dresses of the men, which were very costly, I did not order, but hindered it as much as I could, and remonstrated against it. Of the bulls I felt what you say, though I could not succeed accordingly; but then and there I determined never to see them again in all my life, nor to be where they were exhibited; and I do not speak to defend them.

“All this have I told you, making known to you the truth of what took place, in order that you may determine what is evil, so that I may be guided in reference to other feasts, should we have them. But my mind is not only tired of these routs, but of all feasts, however good or right they may be. . . .

“Concerning the writings, which you say I ought not to show, certainly I have been in agony, for I see that I have erred in doing so; for I have shown them, though I thus received an affront in hearing of myself what was not the case. I saw a letter which you wrote to the Cardinal of Cartagena, than which I never saw a better thing; but you must pardon the great liberty I took in blotting out what you said about hypocrisy. . . .

“Concerning the departure of the Moorish king of Granada we have had great pleasure; and concerning the departure of the infant his son, much grief. I would know what your letter says, but our desire would be to detain him. It appears to me that we ought to provide for him, visiting him under colour of visiting his father, and sending him something.’ . . .

THIRD PERIOD.

1500—1665.

The union of the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon introduced a new era in the history of Spain. Hitherto she had been occupied exclusively with her own affairs, and had wasted her strength on internal conflicts. Her monarchs had been contending for their prerogatives with the powerful nobles of their respective states; they had often also waged war against each other; and when their political jealousies gave way for a time to a zeal for religion and conquest, the Moslem foe at home had sufficed to exercise all their united valour. The detached situation of Spain, on the west of the Pyrenees, favoured this isolation from the rest of Europe; and it was no less remarkable in the literature than in the political interests of the Peninsula. The nation had, as we have seen, been initiated in almost every species of composition before the commencement of the sixteenth century. Both poetry and prose had been developed in the ancient national forms, with little or no assistance from strangers; and, what is more remarkable, without any superior genius having signally raised their standard or enlarged their boundaries. Like the *Gaia Sciencia* of the troubadours, the literature of Spain had been a common property, protected by a kind of democracy, in which no despotic genius arose to sink its contemporaries into obscurity. The subjects as well as the forms had been peculiarly national, but these were beginning to fail. Granada having been a Castilian province from the year 1492, there were no more Zegrís or Abencerrages, whose exploits might furnish materials for chivalrous poetry; and the Spanish knights had now no infidels to vanquish, unless they travelled into Africa in quest of them. The use of firearms superseding the ancient panoply of knighthood, contributed much to the decline of the chivalrous spirit, and still more did the love of industry and social order, which the Castilians began to learn from their Arragonian neighbours. It is difficult to say what, under all these circumstances, would have been the future course of Spanish literature, had not a series of political events at the period to which we are referring brought the country into new relations, and placed *the people in a position entirely different from that which they had hitherto occupied.*

The marriage of Ferdinand V. with the queen of Castile gave that ambitious prince the command of all the armies of Spain; and Granada was conquered from the Moors in 1492. In the same memorable year, Christopher Columbus discovered those vast regions of the West so remarkable for their mineral riches, and from these were drawn treasures which it was hoped would instrumentally subdue the world. The ambition of Ferdinand induced him to take an active part in the affairs of Italy, and Gonzalvo of Cordova, a second Cid, the conqueror of Granada, presented him with the crown of Naples in 1504. Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles, had already been added to the kingdom of Arragon. As regent of Castile, Ferdinand also conquered Navarre; so that now the whole Peninsula, except Portugal, yielded to the same sceptre. In 1516, Charles V. added to this monarchy the industrious and wealthy provinces of the Low Countries, his paternal dominion; and three years afterwards the imperial crown, with territories inherited from Maximilian in Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. The novelty of this extensive empire, which surpassed all that had been enjoyed by any single potentate since the days of Charlemagne, was enough to turn the head of any youthful prince, and to suggest the idea of founding a universal monarchy. The glory of the Spanish arms, which had been led triumphantly into Italy, France, and Germany, and the fear with which Charles had inspired the other nations of Europe, tended to deceive the Spanish people, and to inspire them with an enthusiastic attachment to one whom they regarded as their hero, though he was in fact studying to subvert their national laws and constitution. Thus did Spain begin to turn against other nations the prodigious power which had hitherto been confined within her own bosom; and her character underwent an entire change from a change of outward circumstances. Her sons, hitherto so jealous of their liberties, were placed in a position to menace those of their neighbours; and they lost their own, without apparently remarking the deprivation, amidst the splendours of foreign conquest. The brave knights, who had been accustomed to fight only for the interests of their country, and to make war just as long and in such manner as they pleased, now deemed it a point of honour to display the most implicit obedience and devotion to the monarch's will. Continually engaged in conflicts of which they little understood the merits, and in which, therefore, they felt no personal interest, they began to aim at the observance of the severest discipline as the highest military virtue. In the midst of nations whom they regarded with contempt, and whose language they did not understand, they signalised themselves chiefly by *their inflexibility and their cruelty*. It has been truly

said that the 'Spanish infantry presented an iron front to the enemy, an iron heart to the unfortunate.' In the wars against the Protestants of Germany, they conducted themselves with a barbarity only equalled by that of the Lutherans towards the Catholics in the sacking of Rome. At the same period, the soldiers of Cortez and Pizarro were exhibiting in the New World a ferocity which has been the opprobrium of the Spanish name, but of which no similar example is to be found before the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

Another feature of this age merits our attention. About the same time that Ferdinand and Isabella united their dominions, they also established that dreadful tribunal which soon became known throughout Europe as the Spanish Inquisition, and which, to the disgrace of human nature, continued to exercise its monstrous powers, in their fullest extent, for two centuries and a-half. The establishment of regal despotism was the great object of this institution; and its whole organization corresponded with the end proposed. Religion was but the instrument which the crafty policy of Ferdinand employed to terrify the nobles, to reduce the people to dependence, and thus to subjugate at once the reason and the rights of his subjects. The pope penetrated the designs of Ferdinand and Isabella, and viewed their proceedings with dissatisfaction; but being obliged to support the pretended interests of the church, he found it necessary to sanction the Inquisition, and he consented to honour Ferdinand with the distinguishing title of 'the Catholic King.' Thus did the court of Rome help to annul the privileges of the Cortés of Arragon and Castile, and to vest all the powers of the government in an absolute monarch; and thus did political artifice triumph over the energies of one of the noblest nations in the world, at the very moment when its genius had begun to expand, when the promising flower had burst from the bud, and was about to blossom in full vigour and beauty.

But it is not at the moment when a nation loses its political privileges that the progress of intellect is arrested. The policy of Ferdinand and Charles was indeed laying the foundation for the defects which distinguished the literary school of the succeeding age, but it produced an entirely different effect on contemporaneous authors. Their enthusiasm was kindled by the exhibition of national glory, and while their genius was thus stimulated, their taste was matured by foreign intercourse. The political union especially which took place at this time with Naples, opened the way for that influence of the Italian on the Spanish poetry, which gave beauty and grace to what already possessed *elevation of thought and richness of fancy.*

Nor was it during the first few years of its existence that the

paralysing influences of the Inquisition on the national mind were apparent. When it was first established, it appeared in perfect harmony with the opinions and prevailing feelings of Spanish Christians, so called, as its terrors were ostensibly directed only against infidels, to destroy whom had long been the highest glory of this stern and naturally life-reckless people. The first victims were the Jews, against whom they were already exasperated through jealousy of their commercial prosperity. This race, though it had formed a large proportion of the population, was almost entirely extirpated, and with it the trade which had been the subject of envy. The Moors were next given up to the fury of the Holy Tribunal. Now that chivalrous generosity was going out of fashion, it was no difficult matter to awaken a spirit of irreconcilable hatred towards that people, and to engage the nation in sustaining and approving of their destruction. For it is not to be supposed that this dreadful form of ecclesiastical domination, any more than the institutions of civil despotism, were forced on a people so jealous and high-spirited as those of Spain. Religious zeal had always gone hand in hand with military loyalty; and both were more deeply wrought into the popular character in the Peninsula than perhaps in any other country in Europe. As the blind submission to absolute monarchy was but the excess and misdirection of the ancient loyalty, so the support of the Inquisition was the natural fruit of the religious zeal when it ceased to be fed by deeds of heroic valour, and had become through priestly influence a low, anxious bigotry—a sour fanaticism.

But when the blood and gold of infidels were exhausted, the Inquisition began to look after Christian heretics; and the fearful engine in which the Spanish people had gloried, turned, by a just retribution, on themselves. In 1521 the government received warning from Rome that the publications of Luther and his followers were penetrating the Peninsula, and that their circulation must be arrested. Immediately the Grand Inquisitor instituted a search for all books supposed to contain the Protestant heresy. By and by, a decree was obtained that all persons keeping infected books in their possession should be excommunicated, and subjected to degrading punishments. Next, as prevention is better than cure, the Inquisition assumed the power of deciding what works might be sent to the press; and before the middle of the century, a list of such works as might not safely be circulated was obtained from Germany by Charles V., and sanctioned, enlarged, and published by the Holy Office. In 1558, Philip II. decreed the penalties of confiscation and death against all persons who should buy, sell, or keep in their possession any book prohibited by the *Index Expurgatorius*; and thus was con-

firmed and enforced the jurisdiction of the Holy Tribunal over the great lever of modern progress and civilisation.

With such weapons as these, the crusade against Protestant doctrine was very short; a few persons of distinction suffered death or imprisonment; but after the year 1570, the voice of religious dissent can hardly be said to have been heard in the land; the Spanish Inquisition was obliged to seek employment chiefly about political cases, though under religious pretences; and the great body of the people, who had never been much disturbed, rejoiced alike in their loyalty and their orthodoxy.

This view of the subject may serve to explain how it happened that, while men throughout the rest of Europe shuddered at the very name of the Spanish Inquisition, the Spaniards themselves lived under it almost as happily as ever. It would be forming a false notion of its horrors to imagine that they were ever felt in Spain as they were in other countries—in the Netherlands, for instance, where its authority went hand in hand with foreign despotism, and where a large proportion of the people had received those enlightened views which led them to rebel both against the one and the other. The conduct of the Inquisition was no subject of alarm to those who were confident that they should never come personally into contact with it; and it gave the good Catholic as little disturbance in his social enjoyments as criminal justice occasions to the citizen who lives in conformity to the laws. He who submitted with blind devotion to the mandates of the church was held to possess a clear conscience; and in this sort of clear conscience the Spaniard prided himself, regarding everything like scepticism or heterodoxy in matters of religion as involving deeper moral degradation than robbery or murder. He was cruel to heretics and infidels, because he believed it his duty to hate them; but in the orthodox bosom of his native country he was animated by a spirit of gaiety, to which the literature of Spain bears ample testimony. So that if, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, from the political history of the Peninsula, and especially the record of its transactions in America and the Netherlands, we turn to the literary productions of the same period, we feel as if introduced to another people.

Thus much we have deemed it necessary to say in explanation of the apparent inconsistency between the dark and ferocious character of Spanish policy, as it appeared to the rest of Europe during this period, and the extremely lightsome character which we shall have occasion to observe in the literature. It was while the Duke of Alva ruled with the axe of the executioner in Belgium, that Cervantes kept the Spaniards at home laughing over *'Don Quixote,'* and that Lopez de Vega, who himself held a

post in the Inquisition, produced his comedies. The free and lawless drama of Spain was in the height of its glory during the reigns of the three Philips, which was precisely the period when the Inquisition exercised its power with the greatest rigour and the most sanguinary cruelty.

But a general and uniform cultivation of the different powers of the human mind could not now be looked for. The ban of the Inquisition was laid not only on religious truth, but on every kind of truth likely to enlarge the mind and to produce freedom of thought and intelligent investigation. 'No Spanish Copernicus or Galileo fixed or enlightened the solar system of Castile; no Bacon, with his inductive, experimental tests, did for nature what Descartes did for man; no Locke anatomised his understanding; no Vesalius was at freedom for his body.' The monstrous absurdities which the faithful were required, on the authority of the church, to believe, would soon have been called in question had such studies been tolerated. The literature of Spain is therefore almost absolutely barren during this period of all that deals with either intellectual phenomena or physical science. Even literary genius could not reach that maturity which always supposes a certain degree of freedom and harmony in the mental powers. Thoughts which might not be expressed for fear of the dungeon or the fagot were no materials for a poet's fancy; still less, because more closely allied to truth, was the eloquence of prose likely to flourish under this throne of ignorance and superstition. Forensic and pulpit eloquence, satirical poetry, and elegant didactic prose, hardly appeared at all, and the epic was perverted and misdirected. But while the higher ranges of thought were precluded, a wide field still remained open; the nation was allowed to run riot in a world of imagination; and poetic genius, forced to employ itself chiefly on the drama, and the lighter forms of lyric verse, seemed to grow exuberant and lawless from feeling that here alone was freedom.

Doubtless some of the men whose genius would have adorned the best days of Spain, perceived the limits within which they were confined with a sense of discouragement and degradation; others, in the spirit of loyalty and religious fervour, gave up their mental freedom with cheerfulness; and perhaps there were some lighthearted enough not even to feel the restraints imposed on them; but it is not the less true that the hard limits were there, and that the sacrifice of the best elements of the national greatness was the result. The Spaniards of the sixteenth century cheerfully surrendered their civil and religious liberty, and they lost at the same time their public and private virtues, their previous humanity and good faith, their commerce, their population,

and their agriculture. In return, they acquired military renown, and the hatred of the nations among whom they carried their arms. Ere a century elapsed, the dreadful results became apparent, even in the literature of the country : but our task for the present is briefly to survey what may be termed the brilliant era of Spain.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ITALIAN STYLE.

BOSCAN.

After the union of Arragon and Castile, the seat of government was transferred to Madrid ; the Castilian began to be the language of all Spain ; and the Catalan, Limosin, or Provençal, though still preserved in the legal proceedings of the Arragonese, and used amongst the common people, was abandoned by authors and poets for the language of the court. It was from among those who thus gave up the native dialect of Arragon for that of Castile, that an individual arose to produce an entire revolution in Castilian poetry. He probably found that of Italy more analogous to the Provençal, to which he had been accustomed from infancy ; and he had most likely never become strongly attached to the harmony of Castilian verse or the spirit of Castilian poetry. Certain it was, he was possessed of a graceful delicacy of style, and a richness of imagination, which enabled him to introduce a more refined taste, and to give his own personal feelings an ascendancy over those of a whole nation. The name of this author was Juan Boscan Almogaver. He belonged to one of the patrician families of Barcelona, and was born in that city in the year 1500. Though possessing a liberal education, and sufficient fortune to enable him to gratify his literary tastes without regard to pecuniary considerations, yet, in his first outset in life, he embarked in the military profession. He afterwards spent some time in foreign travel ; but the countries he visited are not mentioned in the brief notices we have of his history. If, however, it be supposed that he went at this time to Italy, and gained an acquaintance with the literature of that country, it appears that he was still far from entertaining the idea of transplanting either the forms or spirit of Italian poetry into Spain. The verses which he wrote in early life were

all in the ancient Castilian style, which had undergone little improvement since the days of Juan de Mena. After having distinguished himself at the court of Charles V., he made a happy marriage, and settled in his native city about the year 1526. It was at this time that he became acquainted with Andrea Navagiero, then ambassador from the Venetians to the emperor, and received from him, if not the classical taste which then reigned in Italy, at least the idea of imitating the Italian poetry in the Castilian language. His friend Garcilaso de la Vega joined him in this new project. Both were distinguished for their correct and graceful style, and both despised the clamour which was raised against them by the adherents of the old national forms, reproaching them with endeavouring to imbue a valiant nation with the effeminate tastes of a conquered people. Their party rapidly increased, and they soon found themselves so completely in possession of public opinion, that they overturned all the laws of Castilian versification, and introduced new ones, founded on a system diametrically opposed to that which had hitherto prevailed. The ancient Castilian measure was always composed of long syllables preceding short ones—in fact of four successive trochees; but Boscan introduced iambics, and the lines thus consisted of short syllables preceding long ones, or rather unaccented syllables preceding accented ones. Then as to the number of the syllables, the redondilla seldom contained more than six or eight in each line, and the '*versos de arte mayor*' twelve. Boscan superseded both these forms by the Italian heroic verse of five iambics, or ten syllables and a mute. When we remember that the greater part of the ancient Spanish romances were never rhymed, but merely terminated in asonantes, it is curious to see a nation consenting to the loss of a harmonious measure in which they had always delighted, and suddenly adopting one so different from that to which they had been accustomed.

Boscan held for a time the office of *Ayo*, or principal governor of the young Don Fernando de Alva, too well known in history as the Duke of Alva, the cruel ally of Spanish despotism and popish superstition. It appears, however, that the poet soon resigned this employment to cultivate literary pursuits, and to enjoy the society of his family and friends. He died among them in a pleasant retreat some time before the year 1544. He had prepared for the press a collection of his poems, to which he had added those of his friend Garcilaso; but they were not published till after his death.

The first volume contains his early productions, which are scarcely distinguished by any trace of superior delicacy or correctness from numerous poems of the same kind in the '*Cancionero*

The author, indeed, intended to suppress these y
together; but his friend Garcilaso prevailed on
him, declaring that he received from these po
kind of pleasure that he felt in looking at pretty child
The second volume contains sonnets in the Italian st
in a greater or less degree, the disciple of P
the spirit of Castilian poetry is dominant thro
the language seldom equals the sweetly-flowing
model, yet the precision of the Tuscan bard is imitat
success. In depicting the passions, the shadows are
stronger colours than the Italian Petrarchists of the si
country allowed themselves to employ. In order to ple
Spanish taste, it was necessary that the expression of love
be glowing and impetuous. At the same time, Reason
deliver her precepts amidst the storms of passion, were
to prove its force by her feebleness. This mixture of in
sity with moral gravity presents a striking contrast to th
enthusiasm and careless gaiety of Italy. But so far a
peculiarities of the Spanish character allowed the experie
it is considered that the fascinating tone of Petrarch h
very happily seized by Boscan, and that he has sometime
surpassed him in the expression of the tender passion.

The greater part of the third volume is occupied by a fre
lation of the Greek poem of 'Hero and Leander;' and the r
form chosen for this work is that of rhymeless iambics,
imitation of the blank verse of the Italians—a kind o
position quite new to the Spanish language. Next occ
'Capitulos,' as it is called—a love elegy, abounding in p
thoughts and images, but, on the whole, too much spun o
most Italian poems of a similar nature. It has also its ful
of genuine Spanish hyperbole and amorous despair. Th
also some epistles in tercets, the best of them being the 'A
to Don Diego de Mendoza,' who was himself the first epi
poet among the Spaniards, and whom we shall soon notic
at length. The descriptions here given of domestic and ru
are exquisitely delicate, and possess much more interest th
moral reflections, though these are noble, unaffected, and
ceived in the true spirit of didactic poetry:—

Conjugal Happiness.

A new and happy being is my lot
Since I a kindly, faithful wife have got,
The first and last within my soul is she,
Proving none other would have suited me.

Others have come and gone in my affection,
 Leaving no traces of the brief connection,
 Apples of Sodom they, as magic gold
 Turning to ashes in my eager hold.
 But now the good is good I may enjoy
 Without attending evil to alloy.
 Whate'er I do is pleasing; for 'tis true
 Who would be pleased, finds pleasure ever new
 In gratefully accepting kindness done,
 And striving to return it. Thus do run
 Our days in circle sweet of kindly acts;
 You smile, my friend, but these indeed are facts.
 My bed is now to me a place of rest,
 Two souls reposing there on one soft breast;
 My table, once the object of my hate,
 With sad bread laden, which in haste I ate,
 And wine, with wormwood mingled by a sprite,
 Hovering around me—poisoning each delight—
 That table now is by affection's hand
 So sweetly ordered, cheered by smiles so bland,
 That all goes on like music; and the peace
 I sought in philosophic subtleties,
 But never found, is mine through woman's love;
 While o'er each ill of life I victor prove.
 And whether foolish thoughts, or painful traces
 Of follies past arise, my wife erases
 With gentle finger all I would efface,
 Inscribing what is wise and holy in their place.

* * * *

Thus pass we in the town our happy days;
 Then seek, for wider range, the private ways
 Of some retired village, where our rest
 Will be disturbed by no intrusive guest.
 There with the sheep and oxen we converse,
 And oft the simple labourers rehearse
 Lessons of wisdom, while their toil they speed,
 Upon the fertile soil or verdant mead.
 As for ourselves—here, like the great Apollo,
 Who went erewhile the flocks and herds to follow,
 And 'came enamoured of a shepherdess;
 Or Venus, who in such a rustic place,
 Meeting Adonis, found herself in straits
 Not soon escaped, as ancient verse relates;—
 And as did Bacchus, 'mid the mountains free,
 Forget in sleep the pangs of jealousy;
 And as 'tis said the Dryads in the trees
 With gambols strive the graceful fawns to please;—
 So we—my wife and I—converse together
Still of our love; and wandering by a river,

Or underneath the shade of some green tree,
 Sitting, hand clasped in hand—as fond as free,
 We argue—his a combat soft and kind—
 Whose the most loving, true, and constant mind.
 The river runs where'er it finds a way,
 So careless our life's stream; of night or day
 No reckoning we take, or hide its stay.
 Far as the nightingales so sweetly sing,
 The cooing doves perch near with folded wing;
 We do not envy then what is in Rome,
 Nor India's riches—we have more at home.
 Books are our company—we love to read
 Of gods and heroes every famous deed:
 The voyage of Æneas Virgil told,
 Achilles' wrath as sung by Homer old;
 The arts described by sweet Propertius,
 The mournful strains Catullus sings to us;
 These last recall to me full many a grief,
 But soon in present joy I find relief;
 By thought of my escape advantage gain,
 Warned never more to mix in folly's train.
 The past be past—henceforth my wife shall be
 By day, by night, my sweetest company;
 In everything her joy be mixed with mine,
 And then shall I for ought on earth repine!
 Each pleasure shall be heightened by her smile,
 Each wo her soft caresses will beguile.
 Together we will rest our wearied eyes
 Upon the mountain's verdure; tranquillise
 Our thought together, listening to the rills
 That run with soothing murmur through the hills;
 Be fanned together by the evening breeze
 That lightly plays in the surrounding trees.
 And when the flocks, warned by the lengthening
 shades,
 Seek shelter in the folds: and youths, and maids,
 And weary labourers, at daylight's close
 Hie to their several homes to seek repose;
 With lingering, sauntering pace we homeward walk,
 Remarking all we see in careless talk.
 The family come out with gladsome air
 To welcome us, and ask with loving care
 If my dear wife is tired—and place a chair,
 Inviting her to rest. The table spread
 With taste, as suits a family well-bred;
 Supplied with our own fruits; and decked with flowers,
 Gathered by our own boys from our own bowers;
 The supper plain enough, but crowned with plenty,
 Hunger the sauce to zest each rustic dainty.

This o'er, the evening passes swift along
 In conversation gay, and cheerful song,
 Till slumber, stealing gently on our eye,
 Bids us retire, and to our couches hie.

His works of Boscan conclude with a narrative poem, in which are eight lines each, giving a description of the kingdom of Castile.

The merit of the fable is by no means remarkable. A mythical allegory introduces the description of a festive meeting between Venus, Cupid, and the other inhabitants of that imaginary island. Little Cupids are despatched by Venus to various parts of the world, to defend her against the calumnies of unreasonable critics and to make known the real blessings of love. One of these envoys directs his course towards Barcelona, the native city of the poet, and a particular account is given of his mission to the ladies of that town, including many gallant compliments. The poet apparently gave himself very little trouble with the construction of this fable. His object seems to have been to compose a picture of greater extent than a sonnet or a cancion, to make his countrymen feel the charm of descriptive poetry in the Italian style. It is impossible not to admire the grace and simplicity with which this has been accomplished. The descriptions are lively, and all the details so elegant, that the tediousness of the parts is little felt. The lyric and romantic passages are pleasingly embellished by light plays of fancy; and, altogether, this is a work which has not been excelled by any later work of the same kind.

Notwithstanding the striking faults apparent in the works of Boscan, and particularly in his sonnets, he is justly entitled to the title of the first classical poet of Spain, which has been assigned him, as the first classical poet of the country. Though some of his expressions are now obsolete, yet in his language has continued a model for succeeding ages. No previous Spanish author had united simplicity and dignity of poetic truth and feeling in the same degree, and under a so correct. That he did not obtrude upon his countrymen a style of poetry at variance with their national character and the taste of their language, is evident from the rapidity with which the new taste spread throughout Spain and Portugal, and from the length of time it maintained its sway in both kingdoms. It is difficult to say whether the partisans of the ancient Castilian style ever have thought of perfecting it after classical models, or whether the disciples of the Italian school unexpectedly shown the high cultivation of which Spanish poetry was capable, and led to it that field in which it afterwards rivalled the Italian. It was Boscan's great work, and he succeeded in it, not by

critical apparatus, but by specimens. His modesty contributed not a little to accomplish the end which never would have been gained by ostentatious declamation.

GARCILASO DE LA VEGA.

1503—1536.

After Boscán, the next place in our notices of Spanish poets is due to the friend who participated in the fame of that reformer, and who led the way.

Garcilaso de la Vega was descended from a noble family of Toledo, and was born in the year 1503. According to the account, his father, who was counsellor of state to Ferdinand and Isabella, distinguished himself in single combat with a Moor in the Vega, or plain of Granada, and thus was obtained, by way of appointment, the surname which distinguished the family.

The young Garcilaso gave early evidence of poetic talent, and had written several pieces in the old Castilian style, when he formed an acquaintance with Boscán, which soon ripened into friendship. Hence he was led to entertain new views of classic poetry, and to study Virgil and Petrarch with a special view to the improvement of pastoral poetry in his native language. But though designed by his natural tastes for a rural life, it was his lot to follow the restless profession of arms; and the wars of Charles V. removed him from the home of his fathers, and changed him from one country to another. In the year 1529 he distinguished himself as a member of the Spanish corps which repulsed the Turks in Austria. At Vienna he undertook to promote the marriage of his nephew with one of the ladies of the court, and thus drew on himself the displeasure of the emperor, whose dignity, it appears, was in some way compromised. He was, in consequence, banished to one of the islands of the Danube, and here he composed at least one of his canciones, bewailing his unhappy lot, but at the same time celebrating the praises of the majestic river, and describing the various countries watered by its streams. We hear of him again in 1535, when he was wounded in the adventurous expedition of Charles V. against Tunis. Thence he returned into Italy, and devoted himself, as far as circumstances permitted, to the composition of pastoral poetry. Bound by his profession to scenes of war which he could not avoid, he solaced himself by employing his leisure hours in painting delightful pictures of Arcadian life, and embodying them in harmonious verse. Yet he seems to have possessed no mean-

derable share of military talent; for we find him in the command of eleven companies of infantry at the siege of Provence, when he could not have been more than thirty-three years of age. Towards the close of this partially unsuccessful campaign, he was ordered by the emperor in person to assail a fort, the garrison of which was harassing the retreat of the Spanish army. Garcilaso executed this commission with more zeal than prudence. Determined to be the first to scale the walls, he attained his object; he was struck on the head with a stone, and thrown from the ramparts. Being mortally wounded, he was removed to Nice, where he died a few weeks afterwards.

It would be difficult to discover from the works of Garcilaso what the author had spent an active and troubled life, almost constantly in the camp or the battle-field, and that he had died on the bed of military honour, the victim of his courage. He approaches even more closely than Boscan to the tenderness of Petrarch; and it is only by occasional characteristic traits that the Spaniard is recognised. It must be confessed, however, that when such passages do occur, the exaggeration is striking enough. Among his sonnets, which are thirty-seven in number, there are several in which we remark a sweetness of language and delicacy of expression which delight the ear, together with a mixture of sadness and of love, of the fear, and yet the desire of death, betraying the strongest mental agitation. The translation of one of these sonnets, though it will give but a faint idea of Garcilaso's poetry, will yet afford a correct picture of Castilian love; a passion which the fiercest warriors assumed a languishing tone and an attitude of submission:—

Si quejas y lamentos pueden tanto.

If lamentations and complaints have power
To rein the rivers in their headlong course,
To bow the trees as with resistless force
In lonely desert, glen, or darksome bower;
If chanted plaints of ills far less than mine
Have charmed the savage tigers to attend,
Have forced the rocks of hell an ear to lend,
And spell-bound Pluto stern and Proserpine;

Will not the miserable life I lead
Move thee to pity—soften thy hard heart,
And cause my humble supplication speed?
If he who loses friend or worldly pelf
Raises unchid his voice beneath the smart,
Oh what his claim, whose loss has been—himself!

But the reputation of Garcilaso rests chiefly on his pastoral

poems, in which he has been imitated, but seldom, if ever, equal by subsequent writers. The first of his eclogues, written at Naples, where he seems to have felt the inspiration of Virgil's *Sanazzar*, is by far the most beautiful, and has ever been considered as a masterpiece. The whole composition has the metrical form of an Italian canzone, and the plan is exceedingly simple. The author describes, with all the simplicity characteristic of genuine pastoral poetry, the meeting of two shepherds, *Salicio* and *Nemoroso*, who alternately pour forth their complaints—one mourning the infidelity, and the other the death, of his mistress. In the strains of the former passion appears raised to the highest pitch, and then lost in an affecting self-sacrifice. In those of the latter there is even greater tenderness. In retracing his recollections, the mourner draws a series of melancholy pictures which have an indescribable charm. The beauty of the poem lies with the description of the beauty of the departed shepherdess. But the finest passage, and that which is considered to be equalled either in ancient or modern poetry, is that in which *Nemoroso* relates how he carries in his bosom a lock of his beloved's hair, with which he never parts for a moment—how, when alone, he spreads it out, wets it with his tears, dries it with his sighs, and then examines and counts every single hair. The poem as a whole, is evidently the genuine effusion of the author's soul; the glow of enthusiastic feeling, the happy choice of expression, and the harmony of versification to be found in almost every line of these songs of sorrow, cannot fail to gratify the admirer of elegiac poetry. There is also a purity of pastoral feeling, which appears the more remarkable, when we remember that the poet was a warrior, destined to perish in battle at no distant period.

The following are a few stanzas from this celebrated eclogue

Salicio. Through thee the silence of the shaded glen,
Through thee the horror of the lonely mountain
Pleased me no less than the resort of men;
The breeze, the summer wood, and lucid fountain,
The purple rose, white lily of the lake,
Were sweet for thy sweet sake;
For thee the fragrant primrose, gemm'd with dew,
Was sought when first it blew.
Oh how completely was I by all this
Myself deceiving! oh the different part
That thou wert acting, covering with a kiss
Of seeming love the traitor in thy heart!
This my severe misfortune long ago
Did the soothsaying raven, sailing by
On the black storm with hoarse sinister cry,

Clearly presage. In gentleness of wo,
Flow forth, my tears—'tis meet that ye should flow!

How oft, when slumbering in the forest brown
(Deeming it fancy's mystical deceit),
Have I beheld my fate in dreams foreshown!
One day methought that from the noontide heat
I drove my flocks to drink of Tagus's flood,
And, under curtain of its bordering wood,
Take my cool siesta; but arrived, the stream,
I know not by what magic, changed its track,
And in new channels, by an unused way,
Rolled its warpt waters back:
Whilst I, scorched, melting with the heat extreme,
Went ever following in their flight, astray
The wizard waves. In gentleness of wo,
Flow forth, my tears—'tis meet that ye should flow!

* * * *

But though thou wilt not come for my sad sake,
Leave not the landscape thou hast held so dear;
Thou may'st come freely now without the fear
Of meeting me, for though my heart should break,
Where late forsaken, I will now forsake.
Come then, if this alone detains thee, here
Are meadows full of verdure, myrtles, bays,
Woodlands, and lawns, and running waters clear,
Beloved in other days,
To which, bedewed with many a bitter tear,
I sing my last of lays.
These scenes, perhaps, when I am far removed,
At ease, thou wilt frequent
With him who rifled me of all I loved.
Enough! my strength is spent;
And leaving thee in his desired embrace,
It is not much to leave him this sweet place.

* * * *

moreoso. As with the setting sun the shades extend,
And when its circle sinks, that dark obscure
Rises to shroud the world, on which attend
The images that set our hair on end,
Silence and shapes mysterious as the grave;
'Till the broad sun sheds once more from the wave
His glorious lustre beautiful and pure;
Such shapes were in the night, and such ill gloom
At thy departure; still tormenting fear
Haunts, and must haunt me, until death shall doom
The so much wished for sun to reappear,
Of thine angelic face, my soul to cheer,
Resurgent from the tomb.

* * * *

Poor lost Eliza! Of thy locks of gold
 One treasured ringlet in white silk I keep
 For ever at my heart, and when unrolled,
 Fresh grief and pity o'er my spirit creep,
 And my insatiate eyes, for hours untold,
 O'er the dear pledge will like an infant weep;
 With sighs more warm than fire, anon I dry
 The tears from off it; number, one by one,
 The radiant hairs, and with a love-knot tie;
 Mine eyes, this duty done,
 Give over weeping, and with slight relief
 I taste a short forgetfulness of grief?

WIFFEN.

The second eclogue contains a strange mixture of metres and styles: tercets are interchanged with rhymeless iambics, and the simple dialogue is suddenly abandoned for the dramatic. In the third, the genuine character of the pastoral is resumed, and the lyric dialogue in octaves harmonises pleasingly with its tender description of amatory sorrow. But both are considered inferior to the first eclogue.

Garcilaso made essays in other kinds of poetry, but with less success. One of the most interesting is an elegy which was written at the foot of Mount Ætna, and addressed to Boscan. The mythological recollections excited in the poet by that classic ground, his mournful descriptions of the miseries of war, and his tender anxieties for a beloved object in his native land, diffuse a considerable charm over this elegant poem, which is, besides, fraught with comparisons and images at once novel and truthful.

The poems of Garcilaso, when collected, form only one small volume; but these have secured him an immortal reputation, and obtained for him the highest rank among the lyric and pastoral poets of his country.

DON DIEGO HURTADO DE MENDOZA.

1503—1575.

Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, the third of the Spanish classical poets, was one of the celebrated politicians and generals who flourished in the reign of Charles V. He was descended from an illustrious family, and born at Granada in the year 1503; but being one of five children, his parents educated him for the

church, and determined that he should seek in this direction those high honours which their influence could readily command. Mendoza therefore received what was considered a learned education. Besides the classical languages of antiquity, he acquired a knowledge of Hebrew and Arabic; scholastic philosophy, theology, and civil law, likewise shared his attention. While yet a student at Salamanca, he wrote the life of 'Lazarillo de Tormes,' the first of those comic romances for which the Spaniards have since manifested such a peculiar taste. Having become distinguished no less for sound and vigorous understanding than for lively fancy, he was recommended to the Emperor Charles V. as one who might be advantageously employed about public affairs, and he was taken accordingly from his studies, and soon after appointed ambassador to Venice. Mendoza availed himself of the opportunities thus afforded him of cultivating intercourse with learned Italians, and obtaining an intimate knowledge of the literature of their country. But he was patriot enough not to undervalue the old Spanish poetry. Though he admired the modern poets of Italy, he preferred the ancients, and especially Horace, who, being a man of the world, might occasionally give him serviceable counsel to guide him through the slippery paths of political life. He seems to have been anything but a servile courtier; and in one of his epistles he thus frankly gives expression to his low estimate of the dignity and uprightness of the diplomatic office:— 'Oh these ambassadors! What ninnies they are! When kings wish to cheat, they begin with us. Our best policy is to take care that we do no harm, and indeed never to do or say anything, lest we run the risk of making ourselves understood.' The ambassador of a prince of such deep dissimulation as Charles V. might naturally form an unfavourable opinion of his office, but he must have retained much of the ancient Spanish freedom and independence to speak his mind in this manner, while yet at his post. The emperor was doubtless aware of Mendoza's way of thinking, but he believed that he could rely on his talents; and he was not mistaken. He selected him as the fittest person to attend the Council of Trent in 1545, and there to express in the most pleasing manner the truths which Charles desired to have told to the assembled fathers in the name of the Spanish people. Mendoza executed this commission to the entire satisfaction of his master; and the speech he delivered on that occasion excited the admiration of Christendom. Charles was now convinced that the affairs of Italy could not be intrusted to better hands, and in the year 1547 Mendoza appeared at the Papal court, then the centre of political intrigue, as the imperial ambassador, invested with powers which rendered him the terror of all who were attached to

the French cause. He was at the same time appointed captain-general and governor of Sienna, and other strong places in Tuscany. The restless Florentines still hoped, with the assistance of France, to shake off the yoke of the Medicis; but the terrible energy with which Mendoza exercised his office was but too successful in crushing the spirit of liberty, and enslaving this last of the republics of the middle ages. He was consequently detested in Italy as a tyrant, and continually exposed to the danger of assassination. On one occasion his horse was killed under him by a musket-ball, intended to terminate his own career; but his intrepidity remained unshaken, and his power undiminished, till the reign of Julius III. This pope was inclined to the Spanish party, and wishing to honour Mendoza with a particular mark of respect, he appointed him *gonfaloniere*, or standard-bearer to the church, in which capacity he marched against the rebels in the ecclesiastical territories, and compelled them to submit to his Holiness. During this stormy period of his life Mendoza composed poems, visited the Italian universities, purchased Greek manuscripts, and collected a large library. Since the days of Petrarch, indeed, no one had devoted himself with such ardour to the acquisition of classic authors. He spared no pains or expense in this pursuit; he sent special messengers to examine the convent of Mount Athos, and bring whatever might be found there; and whoever wished to promote the study of ancient literature, was sure to find in him a friend and protector. But it would appear that neither politics, nor literature, nor both combined, were sufficient to occupy this extraordinary man; he chose also to engage in affairs of gallantry, and his intrigues at Rome procured him nearly as many enemies as his severities. The repeated charges brought against him at length induced the emperor to recall him into Spain, in order that some measure of tranquillity might be established in his states before he should resign the crown to his son. It is probable that Mendoza did not appear much at the court of Philip II., nor take any active part in the politics of his reign, but that he spent the remainder of his life in study and retirement. It is certain, however, that shortly after his recall he was engaged in an adventure characteristic enough of the man, but somewhat singular, considering his age and experience. A quarrel arose in the palace between him and a courtier, who, it appears, was his rival in the affections of a lady. The latter drew his poniard, upon which Mendoza seized him, and pitched him over a balcony into the street. We are not informed whether the result was fatal, but Mendoza was committed to prison. Here the aged statesman employed himself in true Spanish style—composing lamentations on the unkindness

of his mistress. At his death, which took place in 1575, he bequeathed his collection of books and manuscripts to the king, and it still forms one of the most valuable portions of the library of the Escorial.

Diego de Mendoza did more for the poetry of Spain than his countrymen seem to have acknowledged. Spanish critics, it is true, assign him a rank next to Boscan and Garcilaso de la Vega among the poets who used the Italian forms in Castilian poetry; but they complain that with the metre of Italy he associated the harsh versification of Castile. Bouterwek, however, styles him the Horace of Spain, and pronounces the tercets of his epistolary poetry to be as smooth and harmonious as the hexameters of the Latin poet. He was the first to give models of this kind of composition to his countrymen. In his epistle to Boscan he exhibits a delightful picture of domestic happiness, and describes the wife of his correspondent with a delicacy and sensibility which we should scarcely have expected from the tyrant of Sienna. In another we find this ferocious man longing for retirement and domestic bliss in the midst of his career of ambition:—

‘Another sphere I seek, a restingplace,
Sweet times and seasons, and a happy home,
Where I in peace may close my mortal race;
There shall no evil passions dare presume
To enter, turbulence nor discontent;
Love to my honoured king shall there find room;
And if to me his clemency be sent,
Giving me kindly wherewithal to live,
I will rejoice; if not, will rest content.
My days shall pass all idly fugitive,
Careless my meals, and at no solemn hour;
My sleep and dreams such as content can give.
Then will I tell how in my days of power,
Into the East Spain’s conquering flag I led
All undismayed amid the fiery shower;
While young and old around me throng in dread,
Fair dames and idle monks—a coward race,
And tremble while they hear of foes that fled.
And haply some ambassador may grace
My humble roof, resting upon his way;
His route and many dangers he will trace
Upon my frugal board, and much will say
Of many valiant deeds; but he’ll conceal
His secret purpose from the light of day:
To mortal none that object he’ll reveal;
His secret mission you shall never find,
Though you should search his heart with pointed steel!

The sonnets of Mendoza are considered deficient in grace and harmony, but some of them are highly characteristic of the national taste and the amatory spirit of the age in which he lived:—

‘Now by the Muses won, I seize my lyre;
 Now roused by valour’s stern and manly call
 I grasp my flaming sword in storm and fire,
 To plant our banner on some hostile wall;
 Now sink my wearied limbs to silent rest,
 And now I wake and watch the lonely night;
 But thy fair form is on my heart impressed,
 Through every change a vision of delight!
 Where’er the glorious planet sheds his beams,
 Whatever lands his golden orb illumines,
 Thy memory ever haunts my blissful dreams,
 And a delightful Eden round me blooms;
 Fresh radiance clothes the earth, and sea, and skies,
 To mark the day that gave thee to mine eyes.’

Considering Mendoza’s wit, and the natural severity of his character, it may naturally be supposed that his satirical poems are of a superior character. Some of their titles, such as ‘The Flea,’ ‘The Reed,’ and a ‘Eulogy on a Parson,’ seemed to indicate a coarse kind of humour, but they exist only in manuscript.

This author did not acquire so high a reputation by his poetry as by his prose compositions, which will be noticed in their proper place.

FRANCISCO SAA DE MIRANDA.

1495—1558.

The fame of the reform which had taken place in Spanish poetry having found its way into Portugal, a similar movement was made in that part of the Peninsula. At this period the Castilian tongue was held in such consideration, that few Portuguese authors thought themselves entitled to stand in the highest literary rank unless they wrote occasionally at least in that language. Two of them, Miranda and Montemayor, demand our notice in this place; for though the former especially belongs so eminently to his own nation that it would be injustice to Portuguese literature to rank him exclusively with the poets of Spain, yet both did so much to extend the range of Castilian poetry, that the thread of our history would be broken did we wholly reserve a

of their merits for our sketch of the history of their native
ture.

Francisco Saa de Miranda, who was born in 1495 and died in
distinguished himself in Spanish chiefly by a few bucolic
s. These resemble the writings of Theocritus much more
do those of Garcilaso de la Vega. Miranda was passionately
hed to his country, and his thoughts and feelings are, like
of the Greek poet, purely rural. It is evident that he
without art, abandoning himself to the impulse of his feel-
and taking little pains to observe the rules which distinguish
order of composition from another. Hence he sometimes
ences a poem in the metre of an Italian canzone, continues
h epic metaphors, and ends with the simplest idyllic measure.
similar indifference he sometimes employs octave, and some-
tercet stanzas, and thus causes his poems to assume alter-
y a lyric and a dramatic appearance. This mixture of style
iorates in no slight degree the merit of Miranda's pieces,
h among them may be found very beautiful specimens of
arious styles we have alluded to. When he describes the
ols of nymphs, with which his fancy peopled the woodland
s of Portugal, or pictures impetuous storms of passion,
ed by the charm of his colouring, or abandons himself to
s of elegiac melancholy, we often find him relinquishing the
icity of Theocritus for a more lofty and imaginative style,
ve know not whether most to admire the delicate truthfulness
scription, the depth of thought and feeling, or the artless
sion and facility of expression which characterise such pas-
s. In some of his eclogues also, his shepherds are repre-
d as conversing over their occupations or their superstitions;
ere likewise Miranda departs from the prosaic nature of real
ral life, and elevates it to romantic ideality. It sometimes
ens, however, that the plain truth of his subject is suffi-
ly interesting, and then he foregoes all embellishment in order
e truly natural. The following lines from the first eclogue
ay that kind of melancholy sensibility which is more fre-
tly found among the northern than the southern poets of
pe:—

Then fare thee well! for on this earthly scene
The pleasures of to-day fly ere the morrow,
And all is frail and fugitive save sorrow;
But in that region where thou sitt'st serene,
That vision vain shall meet thine eyes no more,
Which warred with thee upon this mortal shore,
Burning that breast which now lies still and cold.
What thy clear eyes behold

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Amid those regions bright
Are not the vain shows of a false delight,
Such as erewhile thou know'st in this dim bound,
But such as aye shed peace and light around;
While calm content thy bosom fills,
Free from the ills
Which ever in these stranger realms are found.

Some of Saa de Miranda's popular songs, or vilancicos, replete with grace and simplicity. The following may be taken as fair specimens:—

'Sola me dejaste.'

'Oh base Galician! lone and lost,
Thou hast left me on the desert coast,
Vile, base Galician!

I went where once thou didst abide,
There thou abid'st not;
The valley to my cries replied,
But thou replied'st not.
Sad, melancholy, mortified,
I wander weeping, while
Thou dost but smile.

Say where thy mother's dwelling is—
I will go to her.
Galician! who could dream of this?
Thou—thou no truer!
Eyes—filled with tears of bitterness,
A heart—where flames of anguish burn.
Oh when shall peace return?

'Todos vienen de la villa.'

'All gather from the village here—
But where's Dominga? tell me where?

The rest have come—they all have come;
I've counted them, yes! one by one!
But she's not there, and oh I roam
All desolate, and all alone!
What shall I do? Without her, none
My path can light, my way can cheer;
Where is Dominga? Tell me where!

JORGE DE MONTEMAYOR.

1520—1562.

This poet was born in the year 1520 at Montemor, a small town not far from Coimbra. It is supposed that, as his family was obscure, and its name probably not very sonorous, he assumed the appellation of his native town translated into Spanish. The talent of this young Portuguese developed itself without the aid of early literary education. He entered life as a common soldier; but his taste for music, and the reputation he soon acquired as a singer, led to his being enlisted in a band of court musicians formed by the Infant Don Philip, afterwards Philip II., to attend him on his travels through Italy, Germany, and the Netherlands. Montemayor had thus an opportunity of seeing the world, and perfecting himself in the Castilian language, which became to him a second mother-tongue. He had, however, a still more powerful tie to Spain, being attached to a beautiful Spanish lady, who is mentioned in some of his poems under the name of Marfida. This Marfida was the divinity of the poetry which he composed while abroad; but on his return to Spain, he found that the faithless fair one had become the wife of another. As the real ills of life are the most effectual remedy for fantastic woes, so nothing perhaps takes the edge off sober sorrow like painting it for exhibition. The grief is forgotten in the excitement of becoming a tragic hero, and in the effort to act the part suitable to the character assumed. Thus did Montemayor divert his mind with poetic effusions of sorrow, in which he represents his lost love as a beautiful shepherdess; and then weaving these together with several former compositions, he formed the whole into a pastoral romance entitled 'Diana.' It was received by the Spanish public with greater favour than had ever been bestowed on any work since the 'Amadis de Gaul;' and as the latter had been the progenitor of a numerous family of romances of chivalry, so was 'Diana' succeeded by a crowd of pastoral ones. Montemayor was honoured by a mandate from the queen of Portugal to return to his native country; but no further particulars of his history are known, except that he died by some violent means about the year 1562.

The 'Diana' of Montemayor is one of the few romantic works which are purely original, and are fraught throughout with individual interest. It certainly can never be to any other civilised nation what it was to the Spaniards of the sixteenth

century; still less can it be regarded as a classical fragment, even though estimated according to the lenient rules by which every fragment is judged. And yet, with all its faults, it possesses a high degree of poetic merit, and is entitled to the esteem of all ages.

The scene is laid at the foot of the mountains of Leon. The shepherd Sireno, who represents the poet himself on his return to his native land, visits the scene of the innocent pleasures which he has so often enjoyed in company with the inconstant Diana. Overwhelmed with sorrow, he draws forth a lock of her hair, and then one of her letters, which he reads. While he is thus communing with himself, he is joined by Silvanus, another shepherd, who had also been an adorer of Diana, but whose love had never been reciprocated. The latter mingles his lamentations with those of the once happy Sireno, resigning himself to the pangs of despised love with a degree of submission and a scrupulosity of affection which are truly extraordinary:—

‘Never beloved, but still to love a slave,
Still shall I love, though hopeless is my suit;
I suffer torments which I never gave,
And my unheeded sighs no ears salute;
Complaint is sweet, though we no favour have;
I reaped but shame in shunning love’s pursuit,
Forgetfulness alone I suffer not—
Alas! unthought of, can we be forgot?’

Selvagia, a shepherdess, now makes a third party, and the conversation which ensues brings out the particulars of the story. Selvagia in her turn relates her own adventures, which were also connected with an unfortunate love affair. Her history is remarkable for that confusion—that labyrinth of attachments which is so pleasing to Spanish taste, and is as foreign to nature as it is rich in imagination. Thus terminates the first book. In the second, three nymphs make their appearance, and one of them relates the history of Sireno in a song of some length. Hitherto the pastoral simplicity of the story has not been interrupted by any incident approximating to the terrible. But now the party are surprised by three clowns in the disguise of armed robbers, who lay hold on the nymphs as they are about to fly. Sireno and Silvanus endeavour to defend them, and a conflict ensues, in which stones are the only weapons of the shepherds. The combat is too unequal, and the robbers are on the point of overcoming their rustic antagonists, when a heroine, habited as a huntress, rushes from a wood, and bending her bow, slays the three robbers successively with her arrows, and rescues the nymphs.

The fair huntress then joins the party of nymphs and shepherds; and in her turn also tells her story, which, with the conversations and songs to which it gives rise, concludes the second book. In the third, the romance assumes the character of a fairy tale, the party being led by the nymphs through a thick forest to the castle of the wise Felicia, who seems to be a witch as well as a shepherdess, and a kind of priestess to the goddess Diana. A description of the wonders of the castle occupies a large portion of the third book. The wise Felicia conducts the party to a superb hall, where they behold a numerous collection of majestic statues, representing Roman emperors, Spanish cavaliers, and Castilian ladies; a place is even found for the statue of a Moorish knight, and the tale of his conflicts with the Christians is related in this sanctuary of the goddess Diana. The groundwork of many plots and love affairs is laid, and many of them are left unfinished. Sireno, as well as Silvanus, becomes cured of his passion for the beautiful Diana, who is herself at length introduced bewailing the loss of his esteem, and throwing the blame of her infidelity on her parents, who forced her to marry the wealthy but uncouth and spiritless Delio. In the following scenes, to the conclusion of the seventh book, where the labour of Montemayor terminates, the history of the principal characters makes no further progress, but some of the other lovers are happily united.

To paint romantic fidelity under the most varied and fascinating forms, and at the same time to exhibit the theory of that fidelity in a poetic point of view, was the idea which guided Montemayor's inventive fancy throughout the whole of this composition; and the execution of that idea bears the full impress of his genius. The versified portion of the romance is the marrow of the whole. A series of lyric poems, partly in the Italian, and partly in the old Castilian style, are introduced; and they are strikingly distinguished from the eclogues of Saa de Miranda by an epigrammatic turn, which in noway injures the simplicity of the composition, or presents, to Spaniards at least, the appearance of too great refinement or incongruity with rustic nature. In the didactic passages, however, where he propounds his philosophy of love, his language becomes tinged with the formality which at that period was deemed indispensable whenever any scholastic ideas were to be expressed; for though Montemayor had not received a learned education, he had picked up some knowledge of the scholastic philosophy, and he fondly introduced it into the romance of his heart.

The other and less celebrated works of this author are to be found in a collection of his poems entitled, according to the old custom, a '*Cancionero*.'

These, then, are some of the men properly called the classic poets of Spain, who, during the brilliant reign of Charles V., and in the midst of the commotions which that ambitious prince created in Europe, changed the versification, the national taste, and almost the language of Castile; who gave to the poetry of their country its most correct, its most graceful, and most elegant form; and who became the models of all who since that period have had any pretensions to classic purity. It is certainly a matter of surprise to find in their verses so few traces of the warlike scenes in which their lives were passed; to hear them, amid the intoxicating sights of ambition, singing only their sweet pastoral fancies, their tender, delicate, and submissive love. While Europe was inundated with blood by the Spanish armies, Boscan, Garcilaso, Mendoza, and Montemayor, all of them soldiers, and all engaged more or less in these dreadful wars, describe themselves as shepherds weaving garlands of flowers, or as lovers so tremblingly submissive, that they suppress their complaints, stifle their jealousies, and beg the favour of one glance from their adored mistresses. We might have expected such a sybaritic softness from the enslaved and effeminate Italians, but it astonishes us in the warriors of Charles V.

The truth probably is, that these men have not exhibited the feelings of their daily life in their poetry; that they have here abandoned the manners, the habits, and the ideas with which they were most familiar, in search of a poetic world the reverse of that in which they were living, just because they were disgusted with the realities around them. The wars of Charles V. were not like the gallant struggles for their country and their faith which had formed the theme of the old Castilian songs: they were conflicts in which individual feeling had little interest, and the cruelties of which they were glad to forget as soon as they had left the battle-field.

With respect to the effeminate languor which characterises the effusions of this age, it may be remarked that the same is discoverable in the Greek and Latin authors who wrote soon after the extinction of their civil liberties. The enervated poetry of the Spanish classics was probably attributable to similar causes; for this reason it was as transient as it was beautiful, and even when it was in its highest glory, the symptoms of approaching decay might be distinctly recognised.

HERRERA.

1534—1597.

Amongst the lyric poets of the age of Charles V., there are still two more whom the Castilians regard as classical—Fernan de Herrera, and Luis Ponce de Leon. The former, for reasons not very apparent, received the surname of the *Divine*; and he seems to have been placed at the head of the lyric poets of Spain rather from party spirit than from any just appreciation of his merits. All that is known of his biography is, that he was born at Seville about the year 1534; that he entered the ecclesiastical state at an advanced age; and died about the year 1597.

Herrera was a man of powerful talent, and he evinced undaunted resolution in pursuing a new path which he struck out for himself. This, however, was not the result of a spontaneous effort, arising from the inspiration of native genius, but was a plan theoretically constructed on artificial principles. His poetry, therefore, amidst many traits of real beauty, exhibits frequent marks of constraint and affectation. He fancied he had discovered that the diction of even the most classical of the Spanish poets was too common, and too much like that of prose. He therefore made a classification of words into what he considered noble and ignoble; he changed the signification of some of them to suit the purposes of poetry; he used repetitions, which seemed to him to give additional energy; he introduced a free arrangement of words after the model of Latin construction; and finally, he, according to his own opinion, enriched the vocabulary with several new words, which he formed by analogy from existing Castilian ones, or adopted immediately from the Latin. These innovations were considered by his partisans as constituting the very perfection of poetry, though at the present day they are regarded as subjects of reproach. With all his faults, however, the real dignity of his language, the harmony of his versification, and the elevation of his ideas, must be admitted. He is justly accounted the earliest classic ode writer in modern literature; for the attempts of Chiabrera, the Italian poet, to emulate Pindar are of more recent date. But a genius so rapid and impetuous as Herrera's ought not to have been bound down to the laws of the Italian canzone, and the luxurious harmony of its long verbose periods.

Among the odes of Herrera, those on the battle of Lepanto are entitled to the highest rank. This brilliant victory over the Turks was highly gratifying to the religious enthusiasm of the nation, and promised the happiest consequences in securing the

of the government at home. Here, therefore, a the language of the poet is the genuine expression of his feeling; it breathes a confidence in the protection of the nation and a glory in the downfall of the enemy, as possessed as it is. The language, which is occasionally harsh and choice, adds considerably to the dignity of the

Among the pieces for which Herrera has chosen the palm has been justly awarded to this Ode to Sleep, a composition perfectly unique: and though the language and the delicacy of the composition mark a complete translation, yet the truth and beauty of the sentiment always remain:—

Ode to Sleep.

O Sleep! that through the scary path of night
With drowsy poppies crowned pursuest thy flight,
Still of human woes:
Thou shelter'st o'er nature's breast a soft repose;
Often these distant climates of the west
Thy slowly-wandering pinions turn;
And wish thy influence bless
Bids these love-horthened eyes that ever burn,
And find no moment's rest:
While my unceasing grief
Refuses all relief!
Oh hear my prayer: I ask it by thy love,
Whom Juno gave thee in the realms above.

Sweet power, that dost impart
Gentle oblivion to the suffering heart,
Beloved Sleep! thou only canst bestow
A solace for my woe.
Thrice happy be the hour
My weary limbs shall feel thy sovereign power!
Why to these eyes alone deny
The calm thou pour'st on nature's boundless reign?
Why let thy votary neglected die,
Nor yield a respite to a lover's pain?
And must I ask thy balmy aid in vain?
Hear, gentle power, oh hear my humble prayer,
And let my soul thy heavenly banquet share!

In this extreme of grief I own thy might;
Descend, and shed thy healing dew;
Then, and put to flight
Rising dawn, that with her garish light
Thy rays would renew.

Thou hear'st my sad lament, and in my face
 My many griefs mayest trace!
 Turn, then, sweet wanderer of the night, and spread
 Thy wings around my head;
 Haste, for the unwelcome morn
 Is now on her return:
 Let the soft rest the hours of night denied
 Be by thy lenient hand supplied.

Fresh from my summer bowers,
 A crown of soothing flowers,
 Such as thou lovest, the fairest and the best
 I offer thee; won by their odours sweet,
 The enamoured air shall greet
 Thy advent; oh then let thy hand
 Express their essence bland,
 And o'er my eyelids pour delicious rest.
 Enchanting power! soft as the breath of spring
 Be the light gale that wafts thy dewy wing;
 Come, ere the sun ascends the purple east—
 Come, end my woes; so, crowned with heavenly charms,
 May fair Pasithea take thee to her arms!

The other poems of Herrera are extremely numerous; and
 some of his sonnets are reckoned among the happiest imitations
 of Petrarch to be found in the language. We subjoin Dr
 Bowring's translation of one of these:—

‘Duro es este peñasco levantado.’

‘Hard is yon rock, around whose head,
 Unfelt, the rudest tempests blow;
 And chilling cold the silver snow
 On nature's ample bosom spread.
 But harder is that heart of thine,
 And colder all its frozen streams,
 Where passion ne'er inscribed a line,
 And love's warm sunshine never gleams.

Deaf are the surges of the sea
 To the loud plaint of misery,
 Though less than thou unkind and rude;
 Dark is the evening's dying fall—
 But what are these, or aught, or all,
 To a tired spirit's solitude!’

LUIS PONCE DE LEON.

1528—1591.

Luis Ponce de Leon is the last of the great poets who adorned the age of Charles V., and who shed such splendour upon that era of Spanish literature. He was born in Granada in the year 1528, of one of the most illustrious families of Spain, and in early youth manifested a preference for retirement, and an indifference to worldly pleasure, arising at once from religious feeling and poetic enthusiasm. His naturally amiable dispositions seem never to have become a prey to the gloomy fanaticism of the monks, though he entered the order of St Augustin at Salamanca of his own accord when only sixteen years of age. He transferred the mild enthusiasm of his piety into the theological studies which were properly now his vocation; and on religious subjects his writings gained him considerable reputation. But it was only in poetry that his heart found, at least during the first years of his monastic life, the faithful exposition of his love for that pure truth to the attainment of which his efforts were directed. In his thirty-third year he was invested with the degree of 'Doctor in Theology;' the year after he obtained, by public competition, the chair of St Thomas Aquinas; to which he added, ten years later, that of Sacred Literature. But he maintained his intimacy with the classics of antiquity, and with a high appreciation of the beauty of Hebrew poetry, kindled his enthusiasm from the Jewish Scriptures. He nearly fell a martyr to an attempt to transfer the 'Song of Solomon' into the vernacular, at the request of a friend who did not understand the ancient languages. Although he explained the sacred poem in perfect accordance with the canons of the church, yet as the Inquisition had strictly prohibited the translation of any part of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue, he had ventured on dangerous ground. It is said that his friend kept his secret faithfully, but that, through the treachery of a servant, the manuscript was copied, and found its way into the hands of several individuals. It was soon denounced to the Inquisition, and the author was thrown into prison. After a cruel captivity of five years, he was restored to his monastery, and reinstated in his ecclesiastical dignities. The university also placed him again in his chair with every demonstration of respect. It is recorded that when, for the first time after his imprisonment, he rose before a crowded audience, who were eager to hear what *allusion* he would make to his recent persecutions, he began his

address, 'As we remarked when we last met,' and continued his lecture, connecting it with the preceding, as if the five intervening years had been but a blank in his memory, and had left no record of the cruel treatment he had suffered. From this period he appears to have devoted himself entirely to the duties of his order and to the study of theology. He lived fourteen years after his release; and though he cultivated such seclusion that he could hardly claim to be familiar with ten persons, yet his reputation was extensive, and in his later years especially, his talents and his patiently-borne sufferings consecrated him in the eyes both of friends and foes. But, according to his own testimony, 'he never enjoyed after his restoration to freedom, and friends, and honours, such an amount of true happiness as was his portion while deprived of all communication with his fellow-creatures, and even shut out from the light of day.' He died in 1591, in the sixty-third year of his age, shortly after having been chosen the head of his order.

Luis de Leon himself published his poetical works, dividing them into three books. The first contains original pieces; the second, which is by far the most extensive, consists of translations from the ancient classics; and the third, metrical versions of several of the Psalms, and portions of the Book of Job.

The original poems are, according to the author's own testimony, chiefly the productions of his youth; and he says that he wrote verse rather in fulfilment of his destiny than of set purpose; yet no other Spanish poet has expressed the intense feelings of the heart under the control of a sounder judgment. He is, without exception, the most correct of all the Spanish poets, having successfully studied to emulate the simplicity and dignity of expression for which the ancient authors are so remarkable. Horace was his favourite, and he imitated his brief strophes in the syllabic measures and rhymes of romance, discarding the long stanzas of the Italian canzone. But the religious austerity of Leon's life, and the tender enthusiasm of his devotional feelings, led to a wide difference between the spirit of his works and those of the Latin poet. While the compositions of Horace breathe for the most part only the philosophy of Epicurus, those of Ponce de Leon unfold the love of God in mystical verse, and range through the whole world of moral and religious feelings. This is most prominently evinced in his ode on Heavenly life, where he describes 'the soft bright region, the meadow of holiness, which is never either blighted by the frost, or scorched by the sun's too powerful rays; where the Good Shepherd, crowned with blossoms of purple and white, and without either sling or staff, conducts *his beloved flock* to the sweet pasture covered with

ever-blooming roses ; where the shepherd, reclining in the shade at noon, blows his heavenly pipe, whose feeblest tone, should descend on the poet's ear, would transform his whole soul to love.' The ode in which the genius of the Tagus is represented as prophesying to King Roderick the misfortunes of Spain is more in the style of Horace, and possesses a very happy conformity of character. The following is from the 'Noche Serena

'Quando contemplo el cielo.'

'When yonder glorious sky,
Lighted with million lamps, I contemplate ;
And turn my dazzled eye
To this vain mortal state,
All dim and visionary, mean and desolate—

A mingled joy and grief
Fills all my soul with dark solicitude ;
I find a short relief
In tears whose torrents rude
Roll down my cheeks, or thoughts which thus intrude.

Thou bright, sublime abode !
Temple of light, and beauty's fairest shrine :
My soul ! a spark of God,
Aspiring to thy seats divine,
Why, why is it condemned in this dull cell to pine !

Why should I ask in vain
For truth's pure lamp, and wander here alone ;
Seeking, through toil and pain,
Light from the Eternal Throne ;
Following a shadow still, that glimmers and is gone !

Dreams and delusions play
With man : he thinks not of his mortal fate :
Death treads his silent way ;
The earth turns round, and then, too late,
Man finds no beam is left of all his fancied state.

Rise from your sleep, vain men !
Look round, and ask if spirits born of Heaven,
And bound to Heaven again,
Were only lent or given
To be in this mean round of shades and follies driven.

Turn your unclouded eye
Up to yon bright, to yon eternal spheres ;
And spurn the vanity

Of time's delusive years,
And all its flattering hopes, and all its frowning fears.

What is the ground ye tread
But a mere point compared with that vast space
Around, above you spread—
Where, in the Almighty's face,
The present, future, past, hold an eternal place ?

List to the concerts pure
Of yon harmonious, countless worlds of light ;
See, in his orbits sure,
Each takes his journey bright,
Led by an unseen hand through the vast maze of light !

See how the pale moon rolls
Her silver wheel ; and, scattering beams afar
On earth's benighted souls,
See wisdom's holy star—
Or, in his fiery course, the sanguine orb of war.

Or that benignant ray
Which love hath called its own, and made so fair ;
Or that serene display
Of power supernal there,
Where Jupiter conducts his chariot through the air.

And, circling all the rest,
See Saturn, father of the golden hours ;
While round him, bright and blest,
The whole empyreum showers
Its glorious streams of light on this low world of ours.

But who to these can turn,
And weigh them 'gainst a weeping world like this,
Nor feel his spirits burn
To grasp so sweet a bliss,
And mourn that exile hard which here his portion is ?

For there, and there alone,
Are peace, and joy, and never-dying love ;
There, on a splendid throne,
'Midst all those fires above,
In glories and delights which never wane nor move.

Oh wondrous blessedness !
Whose shadowy effluence hope o'er time can fling ;
Day that shall never cease :
No night there threatening—
No winter there to chill joy's ever-during spring.

Ye fields of changeless green,
 Covered with living streams and fadeless flowers,
 Thou Paradise serene,
 Eternal, joyful hours
 My disembodied soul shall welcome in thy bowers.*

A more characteristic specimen of De Leon's sacred poetry is said to be his 'Hymn on the Ascension,' expressive of the disappointed feelings of the disciples at seeing their master passing out of their sight:—

'And dost thou, holy shepherd, leave
 Thine unprotected flock alone,
 Here in this darksome vale to grieve,
 While thou ascend'st thy glorious throne?

Oh where can they their hopes now turn,
 Who never lived but on thy love?
 Where rest the hearts for thee that burn,
 When thou art lost in light above?

How shall those eyes now find repose
 That turn in vain thy smile to see?
 What can they hear save mortal woes,
 Who lose thy voice's melody?

And who shall lay his tranquil hand
 Upon the troubled ocean's might?
 Who hush the winds by his command?
 Who guide us through this starless night?

For THOU art gone!—that cloud so bright,
 That bears thee from our love away,
 Springs upward through the dazzling light,
 And leaves us here to weep and pray.†

It appears, however, that he thought it necessary to vindicate himself for this employment of his talents. 'Let none regard verse,' says he in the preface to his 'Sacred Odes,' 'as if it were a thing new or unsuitable to apply it to Scripture subjects, for it is most appropriate to them; and so ancient is this use of it, that from the earliest ages of the church to the present time, it has been thus employed by men of great learning and holiness. And would to God that no other poetry were ever sounded in our ears; that these sacred tones only were sweet to us; that no

* Fernandez X., p. 17. Bowring, *Anct. Post.* Sp. p. 223.

† The original is in quintillas, but Mr Ticknor, the translator, justly deemed it a less suitable measure for an English version than that which he has adopted.

other were heard at night in the streets and public squares; that the child might continually lisp it; the secluded maiden find in it her best solace; and the industrious tradesman make it the lightener of his toil! But the Christian profession is now sunk to such shameless and reckless degradation, that we set our sins to music, and, not content with indulging them in secret, we sing them forth joyfully to all who will listen.'

The classical translations of Leon form an epoch in this department. They cannot be admired by the connoisseur who desires a faithful resemblance of the original; but such versions would scarcely have commanded readers in Spain at this period. The author has himself explained the principles by which he was guided in adorning the sphere of the romance with transplants from ancient Greece and Rome. He endeavoured, he says, to make the ancient poets speak as they would have expressed themselves had they been born in his own age and country, and had they written in Castilian. However bold the attempt, yet if the validity of the principle be admitted, Leon will be found to have fulfilled all that the most rigid critic could desire. Public opinion soon justified the course he had adopted: his translations obtained the rank in Spanish literature to which they were entitled; and they have served as models for all succeeding versions of Greek and Latin poetry in the Castilian language.

With this amiable enthusiast terminates the series of eminent authors who, during the first half of the sixteenth century, composed after the model of the great poets of Italy or the ancient classics. A few others, though of minor reputation, deserve to be mentioned. Fernando de Acuña made an elegant translation of some portions of Ovid, and is remarkable for the grace and feeling which he has displayed in several elegies, sonnets, and canciones. Gutiere de Cetina was the first happy imitator of Anacreon in the Spanish language. Pedro de Padilla, a knight of the spiritual order of St Iago, was the rival of Garcilaso in pastoral poetry; and Gaspar Gil Polo continued the pastoral romance of Montemayor, under the name of '*Diana Enamorada*,' with so much talent, that the supplement has been considered superior to the work itself, at least in the brilliancy and polish of the versification:—

'Despues que mal me quisistes.'

'Since you have said you loved me not,
I hate myself; and love can do
No more than drive from heart and thought
Whoever is unloved by you.

If you could veil your radiant brow,
Or I could look, and fail to love,

I should not live while dying now,
 Or, living, not thy anger move :
 But now let fear and wo be brought,
 And grief and care their wounds renew ;
 He should be pierced in heart and thought
 Who, lady ! is unloved by you.

Buried in your forgetfulness,
 And mouldering under death's dark pall,
 And hated by myself, nor less
 Hated by thee, the world, and all—
 I'll wed with misery now, and nought
 But your disdain shall meet my view,
 And scathed in heart, and scathed in thought,
 Lady ! because unloved by you.*

OTHER KINDS OF POETRY DURING THE FIRST HALF
 OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

CASTILLEJO.

Flourished about 1540.

Although this was the period when Ariosto had attained his meridian glory, and Italy was inundated with chivalrous epics in imitation of *Orlando Furioso*, Spain seems to have failed in every effort in this direction. The free mixture of the comic with the serious, which is the very soul of the Italian *Epopée*, was at this era by no means accordant with Spanish taste. To descend from the earnest gravity of the national historic romances to the careless levity with which the Italian writers treated the venerable heroes of chivalry, was a transition as yet utterly repugnant to Spanish patriotism. Some attempts, indeed, were made at the serious epic; but unfortunately the splendour of recent events was so dazzling, that no Spanish Homer could think of any other Achilles than Charles V., or deemed any achievements worthy of epic glory save those of their own nation under his banner; so that the '*Carlos Famoso*,' the '*Carlos Vitorioso*,' and a host of other caroliads, arose and speedily sank into deserved oblivion.

On the other hand, the rapid success of the imitators of the

* *Diana Enamorada*, p. 220. *Bowring*, p. 271.

nt classic and modern Italian schools did not wholly deprive old romance poetry either of its literary rank or its place in estimation. Among those who defended it at all hazards, most eminent was Cristoval de Castillejo, a man of considerable wit, and determined to be nothing but an old Castilian in poetic taste, as in everything else. He ridiculed the new party with more wit than judgment; represented all the amatory lays of the time as mere raillery; and contended that the loose rhythm of the *adondilla* was the only one suited to the genius of the Spanish language.

Castillejo had travelled to Vienna with Charles V., and after the death of the emperor, remained in that city as secretary of legation to Ferdinand I., on account of the relations still subsisting between the courts of Madrid and Vienna. Here most of his poems were written; and they abound with allusions to the gay life which he enjoyed at the imperial court. At an advanced age, wearied of gaiety and gallantry, he returned to Spain, assumed the order of the Cistercian monks, and died in a convent in the year 1596.

His verses display considerable ease and gracefulness together with no small share of humour. Indeed the strong aversion to levity which he could scarcely resist, even when he seemed to be serious, is a distinguishing feature in all the poetical productions of this ingenious author, and has sometimes imparted to them more of a French than of a Spanish character. The following is a specimen of his style:—

‘How dreary and lone
The world would appear
If women were none!
’Twould be like a fair,
With neither fun nor business there.

Without their smile,
Life would be tasteless, vain, and vile;
A chaos of perplexity,
A body without a soul ’twould be;
A roving spirit, borne
Upon the winds forlorn;
A tree without either flowers or fruit,
A reason with no resting-place,
A castle with no governor to it,
A house without a base.
What are we!—what our race?
How good for nothing and base
Without fair woman to aid us!
What would we do!—where should we go?
How should we wander in night and wo,

But for women to lead us!
 How could we have if woman were not!
 Love—the brightest part of our lot;
 Love—the only charm of living;
 Love—the only gift worth giving!
 Who would take charge of your house, say who!
 Kitchen, and dairy, and money-chest?
 Who but the women who guard them best;
 Guard, and adorn them too!
 Who like them, has a constant smile,
 Full of peace, of meekness full,
 Whose life's edge is blunt and dull,
 And sorrow and sin, in frowning file,
 Stand by the path in which we go
 From to the grave through wasting wo!
 All that is good is theirs, is theirs—
 All we give, and all we get;
 And if a beam of glory yet
 Over the gloomy earth appears,
 Oh, 'tis theirs!—oh, 'tis theirs!
 They are the guard, the soul, the seal,
 Of human hope and human weal:
 They, they, none but they!
 Woman, sweet woman—let none say nay! *

DRAMATIC POETRY

PREVIOUS TO THE TIME OF CERVANTES.

Amidst the throng of diversified talent which distinguished the reign of Charles V., and during the conflict between the new and the old modes of poetic composition, the Spanish drama began to flourish. It was nearly the same period that gave birth to the less happy Italian, which had to endure the struggle between the classic style and the popular burlesque.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, the pastoral dialogues of Juan de la Encina were still the only dramatic compositions in the Spanish language to which any degree of literary respect was attached, and they were, by particular favour, allowed to be represented at court. But the nation at large knew nothing of dramatic entertainments, if we except those mysteries, spiritualities, and burlesque representations of religious ceremonies, which were common throughout Europe during the middle ages.

* Obras. Antwerp, 1598. P. 166.

Now, however, three or four different parties began to cultivate this species of composition; and they did so on principles totally different from each other, yet apparently without maintaining any direct warfare, like the new and old schools of lyric poetry.

The first party, called the Erudite, were men of taste and learning, but destitute both of imagination and of a correct apprehension of the true art of dramatic poetry. These endeavoured to form the modern drama on the ancient; and, not possessing talent enough to imitate the classic models, they were content to translate them into Spanish prose. But it was impossible that such productions should become popular, and we cannot learn that any of them were ever acted.

The next party were the dramatic moralists, who, having the already-mentioned tragi-comedy of 'Celestina' for a precedent, composed a host of similar 'Mirrors of Sin.' Like their prototype, they were read and admired in their day; but their extreme length, if nothing else, precluded them from actual representation.

Equally removed from both these schools was the path chosen by Bartolomé Torres Naharro, an ecclesiastic of extraordinary talent, who flourished early in the sixteenth century. He wrote his eight comedies in redondillas, in the romance style, and endeavoured to establish the dramatic interest solely on an ingenious combination of intrigues, without much regard either to the development of character or the moral tendency of the story. This writer seems to have been the real inventor of Spanish comedy, both as to its spirit and its form as divided into three acts; and so completely national did this style become, that no other was afterwards tolerated. The dramatic genius of Spain advanced in the path opened by Naharro, till it attained the point at which Calderon left it towards the close of the following century.

It is almost certain, however, that even these plays never came into actual representation. They appear to have been still too much in advance of the popular taste, and to have required a theatrical apparatus quite unknown in Spain at this period. It needed a ruder effort to open the way for their being appreciated; and accordingly they were entirely superseded by the dramas of Lopez de Rueda, which, for a short interval, enjoyed the ascendancy. This Rueda was a native of Seville, a gold-beater by trade, and had received no literary education. But he was a man of powerful dramatic genius; and putting himself at the head of a little company of players, of which he himself was the ablest, he composed pastoral dialogues and comedies, not in the character of an author, but of an actor. His object was simply to amuse the

people; and for this purpose he wove together a succession of commonplace intrigues with burlesque dialogues, introducing such characters as fools, roguish servants, and Biscayan bores, which he was particularly successful in delineating. His stage consisted but of a few planks of wood, and his wardrobe and scenery were carried about in a sack. This humble apparatus was quite sufficient for such pieces as Rueda's own taste and that of the public demanded. The performance was generally in one of the open squares of the city, and the following may be taken as a fair specimen of the dialogue. Leno, the shrewd fool of the piece, has eaten a cake sent through him to Troico from Timbrin, his lady-love. He thus endeavours to avert the anger of Troico:—

Leno. Ah, Troico! are you there?

Troico. Yes, my good fellow; don't you see me?

L. It would be better if I did not.

T. Why so, Leno?

L. Why, because you would not know of a misfortune that has happened.

T. What misfortune?

L. What day is it to-day?

T. Thursday.

L. Thursday! Then when will Tuesday come?

T. It is past two days ago.

L. Well, that is something; but are there not unlucky Thursdays as well as Tuesdays?

T. Why do you ask?

L. I ask because if there are unlucky Thursdays, there may be unlucky pancakes.

T. I suppose so.

L. Now stay; suppose one of yours had been eaten of a Thursday, whose would have been the ill-luck? Yours or the pancake's?

T. Mine, no doubt.

L. Then, my good Troico, console yourself, and begin to suffer with patience; for men, as the saying is, are born to trouble, and there are matters, in short, that come from God—and in the order of time you must die yourself, and, as the saying is, your last hour will then be come and arrived. Take this, then, patiently, and remember that we are here to-morrow and gone to-day!

T. For Heaven's sake, Leno, is any one in the family dead? Or why do you comfort me so?

L. Would to Heaven that were all, Troico!

T. Then what is it?—can't you tell me at once? What is all this preamble about?

L. When my poor mother died, he that brought me the news dragged me round through more windings than there are in the *Pisnerga* and *Zapardiel** before he told me of it.

* Two rivers in the north of Spain.

T. But I have no mother, and never knew one. I don't understand your meaning.

L. Then smell this napkin.

T. Very well, I have smelt it.

L. And what does it smell of?

T. Something like butter.

L. Then you may say with truth, "*Here Troy was.*"

T. What do you mean, Leno?

L. For you it was given to me; for you Madam Timbria sent it, all stuck over with almonds; but as I have (Heaven and everybody else knows I have) a sort of natural relationship to whatever is good, my eyes watched and followed it as a hawk would follow chickens.

T. Followed whom, villain? Timbria?

L. Heaven forbid! But how nicely she sent it all done with butter and sugar!

T. What?

L. The pancake, to be sure—don't you understand?

T. And who sent me a pancake?

L. Why, Madam Timbria.

T. Then what has become of it?

L. It was consumed.

T. How?

L. By looking at it.

T. Who looked at it?

L. I, by ill-luck.

T. In what way?

L. Why, I sat down by the roadside.

T. Well, what then?

L. I took it in my hand.

T. And then?

L. Then I tried how it tasted; and what between taking and leaving all round the edges of it, when I tried to think what had become of it, I found I had no sort of recollection.

T. The upshot then is, that you ate it?

L. That is not impossible.

T. In faith you are a trusty fellow!

L. Indeed! do you think so? After this, if I get two to bring, I'll eat both, and so be better still.

It would appear that many other comedies in the same style were composed in Rueda's time, and subsequently. A few of them are still extant; and they go to prove that exhibitions of this kind took place at Seville also, and were not either confined to Madrid, or monopolised by the company of Rueda. Meanwhile several members of Rueda's company continued to improve on his beginnings; and one Naharro of Toledo, who must not be confounded with Torres Naharro above-mentioned, had so improved this species of comedy, that the enlarged wardrobe and

scenic machinery required a number of boxes and chests instead of the humble bag of Rueda. About the same time Juan de la Cueva had the sagacity to perceive that the Spanish drama would never succeed unless men of literary acquirements would condescend to meet the popular taste, instead of tying themselves up to compose according to the dramatic laws of the ancients. This taste demanded an agreeable amusement, furnished by a varied mixture of the serious and the comic; of plots, sallies of wit, surprises, and animated situations; and it could not endure, much less enjoy, the infliction of moral discourses on the stage. The Spanish character had undergone a considerable change with the change of circumstances to which we have before adverted; the age of chivalry was past; the ancient simplicity and severity had been completely superseded by the luxury and extravagance which the treasures of America had introduced; while the ecclesiastical fetters imposed on opinion and conscience had so connected all ideas of religion and morality with those of inquisitorial severity, that the mind longed for an escape, and gladly took refuge in amusements where these unwelcome topics had no place. The people, therefore, were not to be satisfied with the most ingenious dramas, unless interest and excitement were maintained by wild revels of imagination, unrestrained either by moral maxims or artistic rules. They resorted to the theatre to see a variegated ideal world, a diversified picture of romantic existence, and to enjoy sallies of wit and sports of fancy; and they did not choose on such occasions to be treated with moral lectures or chilled with artificial forms. Hence the indelible character stamped on the Spanish theatre. While the dramatists of Italy wrote to please the learned, the Spanish studied only to please the people, and recognised no rule but that of conforming their works to the spirit of the age and the taste of the populace. Their dramas, therefore, were purely national, exhibiting a degree of vigour, and a conformity to the genius of the people for whom they were written, which we seek in vain among the more classic productions of Italy.

CERVANTES.

1547—1616.

The literature of Spain had now assumed a new character. The genius of the nation had wellnigh decided to what extent the imitation of foreign models was desirable; both poetry and prose had thus acquired purity and elegance without renouncing

their nationality; and the conflict between the classical and the popular style of drama had reached its height, when Cervantes and Lope de Vega entered on the career which had been thus opened for them.

Hitherto our attention has been occupied with authors little known except in their own country; but we are now introduced to individuals whose fame is bounded by no language and no clime, and whose names are not familiar alone to men of taste and learning, but to almost every class of society as well as every country of Europe. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra was born, so far as can be ascertained, in poverty and obscurity at Alcalá de Henares, in the year 1547. The only circumstance known of his early life is, that he was sent for his education to Madrid, where he acquired some knowledge of the classics, and witnessed the dramas of the ingenious Lopez de Rueda. His tutor, Juan Lopez, was an indefatigable writer of poetry, and he endeavoured by every means to encourage his pupil's taste for this species of composition.

When Cervantes was about twenty-one years of age, it appears that he thought to better his penniless lot by travelling, and with this view attached himself to the person of Cardinal Aquaviva, with whom he visited Rome. But becoming impatient of this servile position, he enlisted under the banners of his sovereign, to serve in the wars against the Turks and the African corsairs. In the great battle of Lepanto, which took place in 1572, he received a ball which deprived him of his left hand, and obliged him to quit the military profession, in which he had not yet risen above the rank of a common soldier. On his way home, the ship in which he sailed was captured by pirates from the coast of Barbary, and Cervantes was carried to Algiers, and sold for a slave. It is generally supposed that his novel of the 'Captive' describes his own adventures at this time; and if so, his captivity must have been attended with the most romantic circumstances. He was ransomed at length by a religious fraternity, and returned to his native country in 1581, after about six years passed in Africa. On the one hand, he was maimed, ruined, and friendless; but on the other, his understanding was matured, he had gained much practical knowledge of the world, and his cheerfulness had never forsaken him. He withdrew from the busy world to devote himself entirely to literature, and endeavoured to gain a subsistence by his pen. One of his first productions was the pastoral romance of 'Galatea,' which became highly popular, and completely eclipsed that of 'Phileas'—a production of his youth, which had been much admired at the time it was written. He also gave to the stage about thirty dramas, few of which have

But now those of Lope de Vega appeared to flourish, and bore away the palm. Cervantes was so mortified that he laid aside his pen, and appeared no more before the public till he was past twenty years. Meanwhile he had married; and it is supposed that he supported himself on the slender fortune of his wife, and the small emoluments connected with a post which he filled at Seville.

It can scarcely be doubted that the death of Philip II. in 1598 exercised a most favourable influence on literary genius. Under the indolent Philip III. every man felt he could use more freedom than he had ventured to take during the gloomy intolerance of the preceding reign. The Spaniards now ventured to sport with the chains which they could not break; delicate satire was freely indulged in; and a furious contest which arose between the priests and the civil authorities about the funeral obsequies of the deceased monarch supplied a subject for the ridicule of Cervantes. About the same time he wrote some of the 'Instructive Novels,' which he afterwards published; and in 1605 he gave to the world the first part of 'Don Quixote.' What accident suggested the idea of this work is quite unknown; some fortunate circumstance, which cannot now be traced, seems to have imparted to Cervantes, in his fiftieth year, the secret of the true bent of his genius. The success of this effort was incredible. Thirty thousand copies are said to have been printed during the author's life-time. It was translated into various languages, and eulogised by every class of readers. Yet it occasioned little improvement in the pecuniary circumstances of the author. It is recorded of Philip III., that, observing a student walking along the banks of the river, bursting into involuntary fits of laughter over a book, the king remarked, that 'the man is either mad or reading Don Quixote;' yet his majesty never thought fit to rescue from indigence the author of a work so confessedly replete with comic talent.

An unknown writer, assuming the name of Avellaneda, undertook a continuation of 'Don Quixote,' and published it at Saragossa in 1614. Cervantes, highly indignant at the literary theft, brought out in the following year his own second volume, in which he frequently ridicules the rival supplement. Besides this, his latest works were the 'Journey to Parnassus,' 'The Sequel to the Instructive Novels,' 'The Romance of Persiles and Sigismunda,' and a few comedies and interludes. From various passages in the introductions prefixed to these pieces, it is evident that Cervantes set a high value on the celebrity which he had sought so long, and had now found on the very verge of the grave. The preface to '*Persiles and Sigismunda*' contains a remarkable display of the

buoyancy of mind which he preserved in the near prospect of death. The following is an extract:—

"It happened afterwards, dear reader, that I was travelling with two friends from Esquivias, a place of fame on many accounts, but especially celebrated for illustrious families and excellent wines. On the road I heard a man behind me whipping his nag most lustily, and apparently very desirous of overtaking our party. By and by he called out, and begged us to stop, which we did; and when he came up, he turned out to be a country student in brown clothes, with spatterdashes and round-toed shoes. He was armed with a sword in a large sheath, and had a band tied with only two tapes, so that it constantly got out of its place, and gave him some trouble. "If I may judge from the rapidity of your movements, gentlemen," said he, "you are doubtless after some office, or a prebendal stall at the court of my lord of Toledo, or from the king; for my ass could not overtake you, though he has always been reckoned a good trotter." One of my companions replied, "It is the sturdy steed of Señor Miguel Cervantes that has maintained our quick paces." Scarcely had the student heard the name, when alighting from his ass, whilst his cloak-bag tumbled on one side and his portmanteau on the other, he sprang towards me, seized my hand, and exclaimed, "This, then, is the famous one-handed author, the merriest of writers, the favourite of the Muses!" When I heard him pouring forth these eulogiums, I considered it but polite to answer him. So throwing my arms round his neck, "I am indeed Cervantes, sir," said I, "but not the favourite of the Muses, nor any other of those fine things which you have said of me. Pray, sir, mount your ass again, and let us converse during the rest of our journey." The good student did as I desired, and reining in our horses, we proceeded more leisurely. When we talked of my illness, the student gave me little hope. "It is a hydropsy," said he, "which all the water in the ocean would not cure if you could drink it: you must drink less, Señor Cervantes, and eat more, for this alone can cure you." "I have often been told the same thing," said I; "but it is as impossible for me to forbear drinking, as if I had been born for nothing else. My life is now near a close, and if I may judge by my pulse I cannot live beyond next Sunday. It is unfortunate that your acquaintance with me has been so late, as I fear that I shall not live to prove my gratitude for your obliging conduct." Such was our conversation when we arrived at the place where our paths separated. I embraced him anew, and repeated the offer of my services. He spurred his ass, and left me as little inclined to prosecute my journey as he was zealous in his. He had, however, furnished my pen with ample materials for pleasantry. But times alter rapidly; perhaps the period may come when I may resume the thread which I am now obliged to break, and may complete what is now lacking, and what I fain would tell. But no: farewell gaiety, farewell humour, farewell my pleasant friends; I must now die, and I desire nothing more than soon to see you again happy in another world."

A few days afterwards, Cervantes wrote a dedication of this work to the Count of Lemos, who had done much towards the support of his old age. 'I could have wished,' says he, 'not to have been obliged to make so close a personal application of those old verses which commence with the words—

"With foot already in the stirrup;"

for with very little alteration, I may truly say, that with my foot in the stirrup, feeling this moment the pains of dissolution, I address this letter to you. Yesterday I received extreme unction, to-day I have resumed my pen—the time is short, my pains increase, my hopes diminish; yet do I greatly wish that my life might be prolonged till I could see you again in Spain.' The Count of Lemos was then on his way from Naples, and was daily expected home. Cervantes died on the 23d of April 1616, four days after he had written this dedication. He was in the sixty-eighth year of his age, and poor, though not in absolute want. His obsequies were private and unpretending, and the spot where his ashes repose is not marked even by a common tombstone.*

Cervantes owes his immortality to 'Don Quixote.' No work in any language has ever exhibited satire more sprightly or more delicate, or a vein of invention more happily wrought out. It would be superfluous here to give a circumstantial analysis of a book so well known. Every one is acquainted with the Knight of La Mancha, who, having had his head turned by reading books of chivalry, fancies that he lives in the days of paladins and enchanters; resolves to follow the steps of Amadis and Orlando; braces on his rusty armour; mounts his lean old nag Rosinante; and attended by his squire Sancho, roams through the fields and forests in search of adventures. His diseased imagination transforms every common object that he meets: giants, paladins, and enchanters encounter him in every direction, and all the disappointments and misfortunes of which he is the subject fail to undeceive him.

Don Quixote is described as an accomplished man, but constantly in a ridiculous position. He is brave beyond all that real history boasts; facing dangers, natural and supernatural, of the most terrific description; a man whose high sense of honour forbids him to deviate in the slightest degree from truth, or to hesitate for a moment in any undertaking necessary to the fulfilment of a promise. He fights only in the cause of virtue, and, disinterested as he is valorous, he covets a kingdom only to bestow it on his faithful attendant. He is the most devoted of lovers, the most humane of

* Nor was any monument raised to his memory till 1835, when a bronze statue, cast at Rome, was placed in the Plaza del Estamento, at Madrid. *El Artista*, Madrid, 1834 and 1835.

warriors, the kindest of masters, the most accomplished of cavaliers. But his generous enterprises end only in blows and bruises: the giants with whom he believes himself fighting turn out to be wind-mills; the ladies whom he delivers from enchanters are plain harmless women, who are terrified by his interruption of their otherwise unmolested travels; and his desire to serve every one he meets, proves but the misfortune of those whose cause he undertakes.

This exhibition of the disappointments of generous enthusiasm has led many to consider 'Don Quixote' as an exceedingly melancholy book, notwithstanding all its drollery. And the fact must be admitted, that both the groundwork and the moral of the romance are of a mournful character. The devotion of heroism, and the illusions of virtue, are at once the noblest themes of history, and the most affecting subjects of poetry. Men of exalted minds often consecrate their lives to the championship of justice and innocence, and, like Don Quixote, they fancy that they find in every direction the suffering virtue which they ought to defend and support. Without nicely calculating the extent of their own powers, they expose themselves in the service of the ungrateful, and sacrifice themselves to principles altogether illusory. A serious treatise on such a subject would indeed present a melancholy and humbling picture of human nature; yet here we have the same thing in the shape of a satire, written without bitterness, and admitted to be one of the most lively and humorous productions that have ever issued from the press.

If it be true that 'to ridicule one's self is the highest effort of good taste,' it is no small enhancement of this work that there was in the author's own character and history much of the knight-errantry which he satirised. Cervantes, abandoning the quiet enjoyment of civil life to fight the Moslem foe; glorying in the loss of his arm, but obtaining no promotion on account of his valour and his sufferings; astonishing the Moors by his hardy enterprises, yet remaining six years a slave among them; supplying all Europe with mirth by the labours of his pen, yet himself pining in poverty; surely here is the prototype of Don Quixote. We can enjoy the pleasantry of an author who does not spare his own follies, and while he satirises, does not degrade the virtuous enthusiasm which is the subject of his mirth.

In striking contrast with the character of Don Quixote is that of Sancho Panza, his squire; a compound of grossness and simplicity, whose low selfishness prompts him to entertain with blind confidence all the extravagant hopes and promises of his master. Yet his gluttony, cunning, idleness, cowardice, and egotism are mingled with a degree of fidelity, and even sensibility, that engage

our sympathy and regard to a certain extent; and he is thus made a fit subject for mirth, because he is not the object of unmingled disgust. While Don Quixote is the dupe of poetic heroism and lofty philosophy, Sancho takes for his guide that practical and calculating philosophy on which the proverbs of all nations are founded, and he blunders on in the opposite direction for the amusement of the reader; so that egotism is as severely handled in the person of the squire as enthusiasm in that of the knight; and the extremes of poetry and prose are made equally the subjects of derision. The poetic colouring of the whole work is heightened by the judicious use of episodes, in which there is an abundant display of tender sentiment and romantic incident. The charming story of the shepherdess Marcella, the history of Dorothea, and that of the rich Camacho, and the poor Basilio, though not essential to the thread of Don Quixote's story, belong strictly to the characteristic dignity of the whole picture; and prove the power of the author to excite a still livelier interest by the delineation of tender sentiments, and the ingenious disposition of serious romantic incidents. In the examination of the library we have a short treatise on Spanish literature, and the whole work gives us a lively picture of the manners and customs of Spain at that period.

It is thought that Cervantes had an ulterior object in view in writing this romance. The ancient works of chivalry had doubtless produced the happiest effects on the national manners, and associated the ideas of courage, honour, truth, and virtuous love with all that was desirable in human existence. But a host of spurious romances had arisen in later times, in which all rules of probability, good taste, and correct moral tendency were violated, and which were therefore calculated to prove injurious at once to popular taste and public morals. It would seem to have been one design of Cervantes, to exhibit the abuse of romantic fiction, and to overwhelm with ridicule these creations of a diseased imagination. In this he was completely successful. No subsequent writer would run the risk of discovering that his work had been caricatured even before it made its appearance, and the romances of chivalry ended with 'Don Quixote.' It would be well if, in every species of composition, we could thus secure the masterpieces, and place a barrier against the crowd of inferior imitations.

No translation can do justice to the style of Cervantes. There is a precision of expression, a harmony in the periods, and in some passages a lofty and well-sustained eloquence, which have *seldom, if ever*, been equalled in the Spanish language, and which *cannot be conveyed* in any other. But a translator can scarcely

commit a more serious injury, than to clothe this work in light anecdotal phraseology. A simple but solemn style, pervaded as it were with the spirit of the hero, is the only one calculated to give characteristic relief to the comic scenes. The writer is as thoroughly serious as Don Quixote himself, using the genuine style of the old chivalric romances, though improved and applied in an original manner. Only where a dialogue occurs is there any departure from this, in order that each person may speak in his own peculiar manner; and whenever the hero himself makes a speech, the language reassumes the venerable and lofty tone of the ancient romances. This peculiar characteristic distinguishes 'Don Quixote' from the 'Lazarillo de Tormes' of Mendoza, and from all comic romances in the ordinary style.

Cervantes is allowed to be the first writer who thus conformed the modern romance to the tone of those chivalrous stories which are the best relics of the taste and genius of the middle ages, and his 'Don Quixote' has ever been cited as the earliest classic specimen of the modern romance or novel.

It would be scarcely possible to arrange the other works of Cervantes according to a critical estimate of their respective merits; but the second place is usually assigned to one more immediately devoted to criticism and literary satire. It is entitled, 'A Journey to Parnassus': the composition is half comic and half serious; the form, a poem divided into eight cantos, each containing about three hundred verses, in tercet rhymes. To characterise true poetry according to his own views, and to hold up to ridicule the false pretenders to the honours of the Spanish Parnassus, seem to be the great objects of the poem. There is, accordingly, a bold combination of concealed satire, open jesting, and high panegyric. Cervantes, weary of his poverty, and impatient for the honours due to a poet, represents himself as travelling on foot from Madrid to Carthage. 'A white loaf and a few morsels of cheese, which I placed in my wallet, were all my provision for the journey; a load not too heavy for a pedestrian traveller. "Farewell," said I to my humble dwelling; "farewell, Madrid; farewell, meadows and fountains, whence nectar and ambrosia continually flow; farewell, society, where we find a thousand pretenders to happiness for one truly happy man; farewell, pleasing but deceitful abode; farewell, theatres, where day after day a thousand absurdities are repeated, honoured by applauding ignorance!"' The poet arrives at Carthage, and while he is seeking for a vessel, he remarks the approach of a light boat, propelled both by sails and oars to the sound of harmonious music. Mercury, with his winged feet, and his caduceus in his hand, invites him to *embark in this vessel for Parnassus, whither Apollo has summoned*

all his faithful servants, in order to defend himself by their assistance against the invasions of bad taste.

The skiff is fancifully described as composed of verses from the keel to the maintop, without a word of prose between. The bulwarks were a medley of glosses; the crew was formed of romances, and therefore ready for any wild and daring exploit; the poop of carefully-composed sonnets; the gunnels of two bold tercets, giving free scope to the oar; the gangway of long and mournful elegies, not likely to be sung except in tears; the mast, raising its head to heaven, was a long dreary ode, tarred over with prolix cancioncs; the parrel, which creaked to the wind, was composed of gay and easy redondillas; the ropes and tackle, by which the whole was rigged, were seguidillas twined with sportive fancies; while the thwarts were of heavy stanzas. Love-songs supplied the ship with flying pennants; the keel was made both sharp and steady with blank verse and grave sestinas; the sails were woven of gentle thoughts of love, and filled with soft zephyrs; the syrens floated round, impelling the vessel in its course; and the crested waves were like flocks of sheep on the greensward. The whole business of the crew was to compose amorous sonnets, or sing selected ones in praise of their mistresses.

While on board this fanciful bark, Mercury presents Cervantes with a long catalogue of Spanish poets, and begs to know his opinion as to the propriety of admitting or rejecting each individual. Thus is afforded an opportunity of briefly characterising most of the contemporary poets; and this list, owing to the doubtful nature of its half ironical praises, has proved a stumbling-block to commentators. The poets are described as arriving in numbers—countless as the drops of rain; they crowd on board, and struggle for possession; such a tumult ensues that the sirens raise a tempest, to save the vessel from sinking beneath their pressure. The vagaries of imagination become more wild as the story advances, and the satirical is abundantly mingled with the marvellous. Cervantes in the end has an opportunity of pleading his own cause before Apollo, and he points out the merits of his various works with a degree of self-complacency which has been severely censured. The only apology for it is, that the poet, aged, sick, and indigent, denied all recompense by the country of which he had been the brightest ornament, was supported only by the proud consciousness of superior talent, and was not unnaturally led to appropriate to himself the praise which he felt he justly merited.

The twelve beautiful stories published by Cervantes under the title of 'Moral Tales,' are little known in this country, and we regret that we have not space to introduce them more fully to the acquaintance of the English reader. Some of them are mere

anecdotes, some are romances in miniature; some are serious, some comic; but all are written in a pleasing style, and contain genuine and well-selected representations of nature in various situations of real life. They were the first of their kind in the Spanish language.

The romance of 'Persiles and Sigismunda,' which Cervantes completed shortly before his death, may be regarded as an interesting appendix to his other works. It is a romantic description of travels, rich in fearful adventures both by sea and land, and is understood to have been written in imitation of Heliodorus.

DRAMATIC WORKS OF CERVANTES.

If the dramatic compositions of Cervantes were all extant, they would form the largest, but so far as we can judge, not the best portion of his works. It is not impossible that those which have been lost may yet be recovered; for the tragedy of 'Numantia,' and the comedy of 'Life in Algiers,' were discovered in manuscript towards the end of the eighteenth century, after a concealment of above two hundred years. These are the only remains of this writer's early dramatic efforts, and they are unquestionably superior to the eight comedies and interludes which he wrote towards the close of his life, and which proved justly unsuccessful. With all his good taste and critical acumen, Cervantes seems not to have understood the limits of his own talent, and he himself ranks some of his dramas among his best productions, appearing to regard them with complacency just in proportion to the neglect they experienced from the public. Doubtless he was entitled to consider himself possessed of dramatic genius; but the bent of that genius was not naturally in accordance with the spirit of his age, and by endeavouring to accommodate itself, it became perverted and obscured. We have already adverted to the fact, that the Spanish theatre was ruled by popular feeling rather than by literary taste; and that while in Italy men of the highest talent, encouraged by the munificence of their princes, endeavoured to revive the dramatic spirit of the ancients, the plays in Spain were in many instances composed by those who acted them, and who had no object in view but to supply an hour's amusement for the multitude, and to reap the immediate pecuniary advantage. The more educated dramatists indeed understood and recognised the superior rules of the ancient drama, but they neglected them in deference to the popular taste; hence one of them exclaims—

'I am to write a play; so let me place
 Beneath six locks and keys all rules of art;
 Then order Plautus, Terence, to depart,
 Nor dare within my study show their face:
 For books have tongues: I fear lest they upbraid,
 And tell of ancient Greek and Roman schools,
 While I am doomed to follow other rules.
 T' amuse the vulgar throng my plays are made:
 I write, in short, to please the folk that pay;
 They like a fool, and they must have their way.'

Cervantes concluded it would be impossible to stem the current, and in sacrificing his independence to meet the vulgar demand for intrigue, adventure, surprise, and buffoonery, both his invention and his language assumed the level of a poet of inferior talent. It would even appear that he was so thoroughly Spanish as to be pleased with the popular style, and believed himself capable of imitating it successfully.

The tragedy of 'Numantia' is a noble production, notwithstanding many imperfections. Like 'Don Quixote,' it is unrivalled in the class of literature to which it belongs; and it proves that, under happier circumstances, Cervantes might have been the Eschylus of Spain. The subject is the destruction of an ancient city, whose inhabitants, after bravely resisting the Romans, preferred a self-inflicted destruction to surrender, and voluntarily perished beneath the ruins of their homes. The ancient Roman history from which the story is selected, furnished but few positive facts for the author's guidance, and therefore the whole story may be said to be the writer's own invention. His object evidently was to compose a piece full of tragic situations and marvellous occurrences; and he wrote without regard to any rules but those which he prescribed for himself. The play is divided into four acts, or '*jornadas*,' as they were called, and no chorus is introduced. The dialogue is carried on sometimes in redondillas and sometimes in tercets, but for the most part in the octave stanzas of the heroic Italian verse.

In the commencement, Scipio appears with his followers in the Roman camp before Numantia, and in a speech which would have been improved by abridgment, he reproves the effeminacy which has been creeping in among them, and displacing their ancient valour and discipline—

'Now by your lofty features, noble friends,
 And panoply of arms, sure you are Romans.
 But by your hands so white, and your smooth faces,
 Fair and effeminate, I would have deemed

in were of Britain or of Belgium born.
 your neglect, your reckless disregard
 duty, you yourselves have raised the foe
 at once was prostrate and beneath your feet.
 our courage thus, and fame have been belied.
 Look on these walls, that, firm as solid rocks,
 and smiling at your impotent attempts,
 and shameful witness bear that but in name,
 and not in deeds of valour, ye are Romans.
 What! when before the mighty name of Rome
 the whole world trembles and bows down its head,
 will you alone betray her rightful claim
 of universal empire, and eclipse
 the glory of her conquests here in Spain?

general, then, prescribes various measures of reform among
 the soldiers: he orders the removal of the women from the camp,
 suppresses everything else that can introduce luxury and effemi-
 nating his confidence, that as soon as discipline is re-
 stored it will be an easy matter to overcome the few Spaniards
 who keep the walls of Numantia. The soldiers are re-inspired
 with courage, and Caius Marius, in the name of the rest, gives a
 word to the general that they will cheerfully submit to the
 most rigorous discipline. Two ambassadors from Numantia now
 propose an accommodation. They declare that the
 city was entirely owing to the cupidity and injustice
 of the generals who had commanded in Spain, and that the arrival
 of Scipio, in whose virtue they have the most perfect confidence,
 has induced them to seek peace as earnestly as they have hitherto
 waged war. Scipio, however, declines their overtures, and
 the ambassadors, exhorting them to prepare for their
 defence. He then announces his determination not to ex-
 change to another engagement, but to reduce the place by
 siege, and he gives orders to surround Numantia with a deep

In the second scene, the circumvallation has been accomplished,
 the citizens are struggling, not directly with the Roman
 army, whom they cannot reach, but with hunger, which is
 a dreadful ravager among them. Spain now appears as an
 allegorical character, under the figure of a woman crowned with
 olive. She summons the river Douro, on which the city of
 Numantia stands, and the old river-god comes forward, attended
 by the deities of three tributary streams. She desires him to
 break through the waters, so as to prevent the Romans from erecting towers
 on the banks; but he replies, that every effort has
 been made in vain; that the city cannot be saved; and the

only consolation in the view of its impending fate is a prediction of the future glories of Spain, and of the reverses to which the Roman people will one day be subjected. This idea of augmenting the tragic pathos by the introduction of allegorical characters, is certainly both bold and original, but it is generally admitted to be a failure in the present instance.

In the second act the Numantian senate is assembled to deliberate on the desperate state of affairs. Corabino suggests that they should propose to the Romans to decide their differences by single combat; and that if this be declined, they should hazard the experiment of a sally. It is at the same time resolved to offer sacrifices for the propitiation of the gods, and to consult auguries to ascertain their pleasure. The second scene of this act is a dispute between Morandro and Leoncio, a fellow-soldier, who accuses him of forgetting the perils of his country in his attachment to Lira, his mistress, with whom he was on the eve of marriage, when the public misfortunes compelled them to postpone their nuptials—

‘Never did love teach lover cowardice.
Have I e’er been a truant from my post
To visit her I love! Have I e’er closed
My eyes in slumber when my captain watched?
Have I e’er failed when duty called on me,
Because my heart was filled with her sweet image?
If, then, these things be not objected to me,
Why blame me for the ardour of my love?’

This dialogue, which is maintained in light redondillas, is interrupted by the arrival of a victim for sacrifice, attended by the priests of Jupiter and a concourse of people. But the torches will not light, the smoke curls towards the west, and all the invocations of the devotees are answered by peals of thunder.* In the midst of fruitless efforts to accomplish the ceremony, an evil spirit appears, carries off the victim, and extinguishes the fire.

A magician now undertakes to ascertain the will of the gods by enchantment. He approaches the tomb of a young man who had recently died of hunger, and invokes his shade from the infernal regions. The grave opens, and the dead rises, but not a word is uttered. New enchantments are put in requisition, and the corpse is compelled to speak—

‘Forbear, Marquino, thy severity:
It is enough, alas! more than enough,

* The author’s directions for imitating these portents are worthy of notice:—‘A noise must be made,’ says he, ‘by rolling to and fro a barrellful of stones, and fireworks must be let off.’

What I am suffering in the realms of night
 Without this augmentation of my wo.
 Supposest thou that 'tis relief to me,
 Or pleasure, to review this scene of life—
 Most wretched life, in which I live a moment,
 But to return again? Rather it gives
 Most poignant grief, that death, the haughty foe,
 Shall once more triumph o'er my life and soul,
 And thus enjoy a double victory.'

In the third act, we are led back to the Roman camp. Scipio congratulating himself on the apparent success of an expedient which saves the blood of his soldiers, when a solitary trumpet is heard from within the walls, and Corabino is seen with a white flag in his hand. He proposes that each party shall choose a champion; that if the Numantian be vanquished, the gates of the city shall be opened; but if the Roman, the siege shall be raised. Scipio rejects with disdain a proposal which would place him on equal terms with the enemy at the very moment when victory on his side is certain.

The council of war is again assembled in Numantia; the failure of the sacrifices and also of the negotiation is announced by the augurers, who seems to preside over this assembly, and the same tie is again proposed. While they deliberate, the women rush to the council-chamber with their infants in their arms, demanding that they be not left behind:—

'What are you now resolved to do, brave soldiers?
 Have sad forebodings so far wrought on you,
 That you would think of leaving us? Of leaving
 The spotless daughters of the great Numantia
 A prey to Roman lust; and your dear sons,
 Your freeborn sons, as bondsmen to the foe?
 Were it not better that your own right hand
 Should take at once the life that once you gave,
 Than that the Roman avarice and pride
 Should here find food, exulting o'er our weakness,
 And sacking all our unprotected dwellings?

* * * * *

But if you are resolved upon the sally,
 Then take us with you—leave us not behind:
 To die with you is all the life we seek;
 Nor will it shorten much the way to death,
 For famine soon would cut the thread of life.'

Another woman presents her children to the senate, and thus addresses them:—

'Oh sons of mother most forlorn and wretched!
 Wherefore with burning tears and choking sobs
 Do ye not supplicate your cruel fathers
 That they desert you not in this distress?
 Suffice it not that maddening hunger presses,
 But you must bear the cruel yoke of bondage
 To a proud Roman? Tell your cruel sires
 That free ye were begotten, free were born,
 And nursed in freedom by your hapless mothers.
 Tell them, if fortune still so adverse seems,
 And no escape appears, 'twere better far
 That they who gave this bitter life to you
 Should deal your death-blow. Oh ye city walls,
 Speak if ye can—speak and proclaim aloud,
 And thousand voices echo to the shout,
 Numantians, liberty!'

Theogines answers with great feeling—swears that they shall not be abandoned, but that, whether in life or death, they shall have the satisfaction of remaining with their husbands. The last desperate expedient is now proposed. Theogines advises his fellow-citizens not to leave within the walls a single relic either of their persons or property to grace the triumph of the enemy. He suggests that they should raise a pile in the great square of the city, and there give to the flames all that they possess; after which the soldiers shall massacre the old men, women, and children, to save them from the conquerors, before destroying themselves. Meanwhile they are to appease their hunger by slaying and devouring the few Romans who are prisoners within their walls. When they have dispersed to execute this frightful resolution, Morandro and Lira are left alone upon the stage, and a terrific scene of affection struggling with famine ensues. Morandro at length determines at all hazards to venture into the Roman camp to seek food for his starving mistress, and his friend Leoncio insists upon accompanying him.

Scenes of the most heartrending distress, and displays of the noblest patriotism rapidly succeed each other; the interest becoming more intense as the tragedy proceeds. As soon as it is announced that the pile is lighted, the people crowd towards it, and heap on it all the remainder of their property. Among a number of men who pass over the stage laden with precious things for the conflagration, a woman appears carrying an infant at her breast, and holding by the hand a little boy with a parcel of valuables in his hand:—

'*Boy.* Mother, for all these precious things I carry,
 Will no one give us bread?'

Mother.

Ah no, my son,

Nor bread, nor aught besides to nourish thee.

B. Then must I die of hunger? Dearest mother,

I want one little morsel, nothing more!

M. What pain thou givest me, my child!

B. What, then,

Do you, dear mother, not desire some food?

M. Desire it! Yes! but know not where to find.

B. Then why not buy it, mother? If you will not,

Myself will buy it from the first I meet.

Yes, I will give him all these costly things

For one small morsel of dry bread, for oh

This hunger pains me dreadfully!

M. And thou,

Poor baby, wherefore clingest thou to my breast?

The milky stream thou suck'st is changed to blood!

Rather tear off my flesh if 'twill appease

Thy hunger, for my arms are grown so weak,

I can no more embrace thee. Oh with what

Can I sustain thy life, son of my soul!

Even of my flesh there scarcely now remains

Enough to satisfy thy craving want.

Oh hunger, hunger, with what cruel pangs

Thou rendest soul and flesh apart! Oh war,

What dreadful death dost thou prepare for me!

B. Dear mother, walking seems to make me worse,

Pray let us hasten to the place we seek.

M. 'Tis just at hand, the burning pile where thou

Mayest rid thee of the burden that thou bearest.'

The fourth act commences with the sound of an alarm in the Roman camp. Scipio inquires the cause, and is informed that two Numantians have crossed the barriers, killed several soldiers, and carried off some biscuit; that one of them has been killed, and the other has escaped over the wall, and regained the city. At the next scene Morandro appears carrying to Lira the bread which he has thus obtained. It is not only wet with the tears he has been shedding over the fate of his friend, but stained with the blood which flows from a mortal wound which he has himself received. He lays at the feet of his mistress this last tribute of affection, and immediately expires. She refuses to touch the early-purchased morsel, and at the same moment her little mother flies to her arms, as a refuge from the soldiery, and dies in convulsions. The subsequent scenes display the horrid carnage which takes place among the citizens, and the difficulties which one of the last survivors experience in finding any one to put them to death. When all is over, the Romans are struck with the silence which reigns in the city, and Caius Marius, scaling

the walls, is shocked to see the streets filled with dead bodies, and the city as it were a lake of blood. Scipio's fear is that this general massacre will disappoint him of the honour of a triumph. Accompanied by two of his generals, he searches Numantia for a single living captive to grace his chariot wheels, and at length the party discover a youth who had fled from the soldiery, and taken refuge at the top of a lofty tower. Scipio, with kind speeches and promises, endeavours to prevail on him to surrender himself; but the lad rejects his offers with indignation; and after pronouncing fearful maledictions on the oppressors of his country, he throws himself from the tower, and falls lifeless at the feet of the conqueror. The tragedy closes by representing Fame with a trumpet in her hand promising immortal renown to the patriotic citizens of Numantia.

This drama was acted several times during the earlier part of the author's life; and if it be true, as we are told, that it was represented at Saragossa during the siege of that city, we may imagine the enthusiasm which it must have excited, and with what spirit the Spaniards must have prepared to encounter new dangers, and submit to new sacrifices. It is probable that the Spanish theatre at this time, in however rude a condition, approached much more nearly than our own to that of the ancient Greeks, in the influence it exerted over the people, and the power which the poet exercised over the passions of his audience. We must at the same time be struck with the ferocity which abounds throughout the whole drama. It excites horror, but elicits no tears. Here is one symptom of the change to which we have already adverted as having taken place in the national character. When the armies of Charles V. and Philip II. had acquired these savage dispositions, the community soon caught the infection, and even the literature of the nation began to exhibit similar features.

The other early drama of Cervantes, entitled '*Life in Algiers*,' has been called a comedy; and yet neither liveliness in the incident nor humour in the characters relieves the gloomy picture which this work presents. The author has returned from his captivity in Algiers with feelings of detestation against the Moors, and deep anxiety for the deliverance of the many other Christian prisoners who had fallen into their hands. To awaken public feeling on this subject seems to have been his aim in this and several others of his numerous works. In the prosecution of his design he proposes merely to give a sketch of the life which these wretched captives lead in the land of their thralldom; and he therefore invents no plot, nor does he pay any attention to the laws of the *unities*. He makes a collection of various adven-

tures, unconnected with one another, except by the community of suffering. Two of the principal characters are Aurelio, a Christian slave, and Sylvia his wife, who are both solicited by their owners to violate their marriage vow. Divination is used, but the demons are found to have no power over a Christian; Necessity and Opportunity are introduced, as allegorical characters, but they also prove unsuccessful. In the end, the faithful and affectionate pair are released, and sent home under promise of a munificent ransom.

In another case, a Moor who has been forced to receive baptism at Valencia, is afterwards exiled with others of his race, and he takes up arms against the Christians: he is made prisoner in the battle, and being recognised, is delivered over to the Inquisition, who condemn him to the flames, as an apostate from the faith of which he had received the sign and the seal. His friends, in retaliation, purchase a Valencian captive, and inflict a similar death upon him. This anecdote is founded on fact; and if the horror of such reprisals had struck the Spanish nation with a sense of their own barbarity, it had been well; but it seems to be assumed that all the guilt of these transactions lay on the side of the infidels.

Perhaps the most affecting of the scenes in Algiers is the 'Slave Market.' The public crier announces the sale of a father, mother, and two children, to be disposed of in separate lots. The calm resignation of the father, confiding in Heaven for the protection of his family, the anguish of the mother, and the childish confidence of the little boys, who feel assured that no power on earth can dispose of them against the will of their parents, constitute an affecting picture, which we fear is too often realised even in the nineteenth century. A merchant, about to purchase one of the children, desires him to open his mouth, that he may see whether he is in good health. The poor little fellow supposes that he wishes to extract one of his teeth; he assures him, accordingly, that it does not ache, and intreats him not to pull it. Such incidents depict the horrors of slavery more vividly than the most laboured eloquence could describe them. There is something heart-touching in the child's ignorance of the cruel destiny that awaits him; and in dark contrast appears the cool, heartless calculations of the merchant, who witnesses the distress of the family without the least emotion. Finally, he buys the youngest child, and the following dialogue ensues:—

'Merchant. Come now with me, 'tis time you went to rest.

Juan. No, sir; I will not leave my mother here

To go with any one.

Mother. Alas, my boy!

This man has bought thee for his slave;
Henceforth thou art not mine, but his.

J. What, mother! do you cast me off?

M. Oh Heaven! how cruel is my lot!

Mer. Come, hasten, child!

J. Brother, you'll go with me!

Francisco. No, Juan, 'tis not in my power;

But God protect you, Juan!

M. Oh my child!

My joy and pride, Heaven will remember thee.

J. Oh father, mother, where shall I be carried

Away from you?

M. Will you permit me, sir,

One moment's whisper in my infant's ear?

Grant me this little favour; very soon

I shall have no relief from sorrow.

Mer. Say quickly what you wish;

To-night you part for ever.

M. Oh, never knew I grief till now.

J. Pray let me stay with you, dear mother;

I know not where he means to carry me.

M. Alas! poor child, misfortune has been thine

Even from thy birth; the heavens above are dark;

The elements do rage; the very sea

And winds combine against me. Thou, my child,

Know'st not the dark and dread misfortunes

In which thy helpless infancy is plunged;

Thou canst not comprehend thy fate;

'Tis better so. But what I crave of thee,

Since I must never see thee more, my life,

Is that thou never, never wilt forget

To say, as when at home, thy *Ave Mary*;

For she, the queen of goodness, virtue, grace,

Can loosen all thy bonds, and set thee free.

Ayder. Oh hear the wicked Christian poisoning

Her artless child! You wish, then, that the boy

Should, like yourself, continue still in error?

J. Oh, mother! may I not remain with you?

Say, must these Moslems carry me away?

M. In taking thee, my child, they leave me poor.

J. Oh I am much afraid!

M. 'Tis I, my child,

Have cause to fear at seeing thee depart,

That thou'lt forget thy God, thyself, and me.

What else can happen, when thou art alone,

At such a tender age, amidst a race

Full of deceit and all iniquity?

Crier. Silence, you wicked woman! else you wish

Your head should pay for what your tongue has done!

In the fifth act Juan is introduced as an apostate, having been seduced by the dainty food and rich clothing which his master has provided. He is proud of his turban, and scorns his fellow-slaves, saying that it is sinful for a Mussulman to hold familiar intercourse with Christians. A scene occurs between Juan and his mother, who is in the deepest despair in consequence of his apostacy; but she does not again appear: her grief is supposed to have been too poignant for representation.

An episode is furnished by the escape of Pedro Alvarez, one of the captives, who, unable any longer to endure the horrors of slavery, resolves to cross the desert, and endeavour to reach Oran by following the line of the coast. Having prepared ten pounds of biscuit, composed of eggs, flour, and honey, and provided himself with three pair of shoes, he undertakes a journey of sixty leagues through an unknown desert, infested with wild beasts.

In one scene we find the runaway slave alone in the midst of the desert, having lost his way; his provisions are exhausted; his shoes worn out; his clothes in tatters; and he is reduced to such a state of weakness, that he can hardly crawl any further. In his distress he invokes the Virgin of Montserrat, and presently a lion appears crouching at his feet. This lion becomes his guide. The strength of the captive is renewed; he pursues his journey with vigour; and when he again appears upon the stage he has nearly reached Oran.

Finally, an announcement is made that a monk from Europe has arrived, bringing with him a sum of money sufficient for the redemption of all the captives. They fall on their knees in thanksgiving and prayer, and the curtain drops, leaving the impression that they are all redeemed.

These two dramas of Cervantes occupy a unique position in the literature of Spain. We never again meet with an instance of the terrible majesty that reigns in 'The Numantia,' united with such simplicity of action and truthfulness of sentiment. Lope de Vega introduced new plays; and the public, delighting to pursue an intrigue through its thousand windings, loathed the representation of deep and powerful emotions when unattended with surprise. Cervantes himself yielded to the national taste, but without satisfying it, in the eight plays above-mentioned, which were the work of his declining years. The following is his own account of these compositions:—

'Some years ago I returned to the old occupation of my leisure hours; and supposing that the period had not passed away in which might hear the voice of praise, I began again to write comedies. The birds, however, had flown. Though the managers of the theatres were aware of my writing them, yet none of them asked for my

I threw them into the corner of a trunk, condemning them to my own mind to eternal oblivion. Not long afterwards a bookseller told me that he would have purchased them had he not been told by an eminent author that no dependence could be placed on my judgment, though I was a good prose writer. To confess the truth, I was sadly mortified at this information. I said to myself, 'I am greatly changed, or the world, unlike its wont, is much wiser since my youth, for I was then esteemed no less than a poet.' With these feelings I sat down and read my dramas with the interludes that accompanied them. I thought them good but they might be allowed to see the light. In no very good honour I sold them to the bookseller who has now printed them; and I have pocketed the money with satisfaction, without distressing myself about the opinions of the gentlemen of the theatre. I was willing to make them as good as I could; and if, dear reader, they meet thy approbation, I pray thee when thou meetest any of my voluminaries, to advise him to amend his manners, and not to criticise so severely; for after all, the plays contain no incongruities or striking defects.

Notwithstanding the author's own favourable view of these compositions, it is the general opinion that, with the exception of a few animated scenes, they are dull and tedious. The introduction, however, is curious, and worth quotation:—

'I must beg your indulgence, dear reader, if in this prologue I seem a little to overstep my accustomed modesty. Sometime ago I happened to be in company with a few friends who were conversing about theatricals, and they treated the subject with great subtlety and refinement. They spoke of the man who was the first in Spain to release the drama from its swathing bands, and to clothe it in pomp and magnificence. Being elder than any of them, I observed that I had frequently witnessed the performances of the great Lope de Rueda—a man distinguished at once as an actor and a scholar. He was born at Seville, and was by trade a goldbeater. In pastoral poetry he displayed great merit; and no one, either before or since, has excelled him in that department. Although I could not judge of the merit of his poems when I heard him recite them—for I was then but a child—yet some of them remain in my memory, and appear to me now to be worthy of their reputation. In the time of Rueda all the apparatus of a dramatist and a manager consisted of four white cloaks, bound with gilt leather, for the dress of shepherds; also four beards and wigs, and four crooks more or less. These were contained in a bag of no great size. The dramas were mere dialogues or eclogues between two or three shepherds and a shepherdess. And in order to enliven and prolong these conversations, negresses were introduced as confidants or go-betweens; and sometimes clowns and Biscayan boors made their appearance: such were the interludes of the drama. At this time the stage was composed of five or six planks placed upon four

blocks of wood, so as to raise the actors a foot or two above the ground. Its only appendage was an old curtain, hung up with strings, to separate the dressing-room from the audience. Behind were placed the musicians, who sang old ballads without any guitar. There was no scenery—no combats between Moors and Christians—no trap-doors, by which figures might appear to rise out of the earth—no angels or spirits descending in clouds from heaven. At length Rueda died, and was buried between the two choirs in the great church of Cordova, near the spot where that celebrated madman Luis Lopez is interred. He was succeeded by Naharro, a native of Toledo, who obtained a great reputation, especially in his representation of a meddling poltroon. Naharro improved the scenic decorations, and substituted trunks and portmanteaus for the bag which contained the wardrobe. He brought the music upon the stage, and abolished the use of false beards, desiring all his actors to appear undisguised, unless there was occasion to change their characters. He invented scenery, clouds, thunder, lightning, and introduced challenges and combats; but nothing of this kind was carried to its present perfection (and it is here that I must trespass upon my modesty) till my own compositions were exhibited in the theatre at Madrid. I was the first to represent the phantoms of the imagination, and the hidden thoughts of the soul, by introducing allegorical figures of them on the stage; and the idea was universally applauded. During this period I composed from twenty to thirty dramas, all of which were represented—not a single cucumber, orange, or any other missile, was thrown at the actors; they were permitted to go through their parts without hisses, without confusion, and without clamour. I was afterwards engaged with other matters, and so laid aside my pen, and forsook the drama. In the meantime Lope de Vega appeared, and at once assumed the dramatic crown. He filled the world with ingenious comedies, of which he wrote so many that they could not be comprised in ten thousand pages; and strange to say, they were all represented in his lifetime, and most of them in his own presence. All his rivals put together have not written half so much as he did himself. Nevertheless, as God grants not all things to one man, the labours of Dr Ramon, the most laborious writer after the great Lopez, have been highly esteemed. The well-contrived plots of the Licentiate Miguel Sanchez; the gravity of Dr Mira de Mescua; the sagacity and invention of the Canon Tarraga; the sweetness of Guillen de Castro; the refinement of Aguilar; the sonorous pomp of Luis Velez de Guevara; the polished wit of Don Antonio de Galarza, whose dramas are written in a provincial dialect; and lastly, the love-plots of Gaspard d'Avila—all these have likewise met with applause; and they bore their part with the works of the great Lopez in the creation of the Spanish drama.

Such, then, it appears, was the first age of the Spanish theatre. If we compare the *pastoral dialogues* adverted to with the *dramas*

of contemporary Italian writers, it must be acknowledged that in all the mechanical parts of the dramatic art, Spain was at least half a century behind Italy.

LOPE DE VEGA.

1562-1635.

Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, the triumphant rival of Cervantes in the dramatic art, was born at Madrid in the year 1562. Consequently he was contemporary with Tasso in Italy, with Corneille in France, with Camoens in Portugal, and with Shakspeare in England: for it was the time when the drama was reviving on every hand. Fifteen hundred years had elapsed since it had disappeared from the stages of Greece and Rome; and Europe, now no longer satisfied with monkish buffooneries, hailed with delight the restoration of theatricals. Marvellous stories are told of the early manifestations of poetic genius in Lope de Vega, and of his talent when a mere boy for composing verses. Though his parents were not wealthy, they procured for him a literary education; but he lost them before he was old enough to attend the university, and was obliged, for the completion of his studies, to Juan Geronimo Manriquez, the inquisitor-general, and bishop of Avila, who sent him to college at Alcalá. After obtaining his degree, he returned to Madrid, and became secretary to the Duke of Alva. He soon after married, and that event, which ought to have opened a career of domestic happiness, proved the commencement of a series of misfortunes. He was forced into an affair of honour, wounded his adversary dangerously, and was obliged to fly. After living several years in exile he returned to Madrid; but his wife soon afterwards died. His grief for her loss, added to his religious and patriotic zeal, induced him to enter into one of the military corps which composed the Invincible Armada for the invasion of England. He was one of the few who returned in safety to his own country, deeply disappointed at the frustration of the project. A vigorous constitution, however, and an elastic spirit supported him; he again became secretary, again entered into the married state, and enjoyed a few years of domestic happiness. On the death of his second wife, he took holy orders, resolving to renounce the pleasures of the world. He did not, however, immure himself in a convent, but continued till the end of his life to cultivate poetry. He composed in all the kinds of verse which were in use in his time, and in all he was successful; but his dramas were received with an enthusiasm

which no other Spanish poet had ever excited. He so exactly struck the chord which harmonised with the taste of the Spanish public, that he was almost worshipped in Spain; and though he only pursued the track which had been opened by Torres Naharro, yet his countrymen esteemed him the inventor of the national comedy.

Lope de Vega's fertility of invention, and his talent for composing regular and well-constructed verses, as rapidly as if he had been writing prose, is unparalleled in the history of literature. His friend and biographer Montalvan says that he composed more rapidly than his amanuensis could copy, and the managers of the theatres kept him continually on the spur, for the most part carrying away his pieces before he had time either to read or correct them. Within four-and-twenty hours he could write a versified drama of three acts, in redondillas, interspersed with sonnets, tercets, and octaves, and abounding throughout in intrigues, prodigies, and interesting situations. This astonishing facility enabled him to supply the Spanish theatre with upwards of 2000 dramas, of which about 300 were printed, and remain extant. According to his own testimony, he wrote on an average five sheets per day, and it has therefore been calculated that he must have written above 133,000 sheets during his life, including above 20,000,000 verses. Lope de Vega was trammelled by no rules of criticism; not that he was ignorant of the theory of classic poetry, but that he delighted in letting his verses flow on with freedom, and was confident that whatever he produced would succeed. Besides, he said that the public paid for the drama, and it was fair that they should have what they liked best for their money. It is said that he realised a large sum by his labours as an author, and that at one time he possessed above 100,000 ducats. But his charity to the poor, no less perhaps than that taste for pomp and extravagance which were the usual fruits of Castilian pride, soon dissipated his wealth; and after living in splendour, he died almost in poverty.

If Lope de Vega's poetic talent procured him gain, it furnished him more abundantly still with glory; and perhaps no poet was ever more honoured during his lifetime. He was chosen president of the Spiritual College at Madrid; Urban VIII. presented him with the Cross of Malta, the title of doctor of theology, and the appointment of Fiscal to the Apostolic Chamber. Perhaps Lope de Vega was not indebted to his poetic talents alone for these marks of favour from his holiness. No Spanish poet of the same rank had manifested such enthusiastic zeal for the interests of the religion which he professed. He was accordingly appointed one of the *familiares* of the Inquisition, an office

of
all
half

was at that time attached. The people expressed their admiration. When he appeared in the streets, a crowd collected round him, followed shouting, and the men stood before him of 'the prodigy of nature,' which had been prophesied by the com-
antes, was generally adopted by the com-
of him was accordingly considered a high honor. In the midst of this universal homage he lived till his seventy-third year. He died in 1635, and his funeral was celebrated with princely magnificence. The funeral was performed by the choir of the chapel-royal, and three days were devoted to the religious ceremonies, which lasted three days in memory of the Spanish Phoenix, as he was called, was performed in all the theatres throughout the country.

Vega was an original genius only in dramatic poetry; in every other class of composition he was but an accurate imitator. He called whenever he aimed at originality. Succeeding writers merely improved on the models which he had left them, and it may be asserted that he dictated the style of almost all the dramatic entertainments that obtained in Spain for 150 years. If, therefore, we glance at the leading features of his dramas, we are furnished with a key to most of the peculiarities that distinguished the Spanish theatre in its golden age.

The word comedy in the dramatic language of Spain bears a meaning totally different from that which was attached to it by the ancient Greeks and Romans, and which it still conveys in the countries of Europe. Its spirit must not be sought in that popular satire which constitutes the very essence of comedy as we have been accustomed to understand it. A Spanish comedy is, in principle, a dramatic novel; and as there are comic, tragic, historic, and purely romantic novels, so the comedy of Spain adopts all these modes of exciting the interest of the audience. Even a motley combination of the serious and burlesque, the heroic and the vulgar, is not hostile to its spirit, for it does not aim at maintaining the interest in any particular direction. This peculiarity was remarkably suitable to the national character of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as it relieved the audience from any very long continuance of serious impressions. The great indispensable requisite was a complicated plot, the subject of which was generally drawn from the sphere of common life. It is said that strangers find great difficulty in following the thread of a drama on the stage at Madrid, while the natives, who are accustomed to watch the unfoldings of such intricacies, can trace them with surprising facility. And as no novel-reader chooses to read the same story a second time, we can understand how the

natural fecundity of Lope de Vega's genius was maintained in activity by incessant demand. Half the enjoyment of the play was lost if the plot was known beforehand; and therefore it not unfrequently occurred that a comedy of his was represented within twenty-four hours after it was conceived in his own mind.

In Lope de Vega's time, the classification of sacred and profane, or, as they were called, Divine and Human Comedies, was first adopted. The sacred were framed on the model of the mysteries which were performed in the cloisters during the middle ages, and they were either 'Vidas de Santos' (lives of saints), or 'Autos Sacramentales' (sacramental acts). The temporal dramas were subdivided into heroic or historical comedies, which represented subjects of history, mythology, or allegory; and comedies 'de Capa y Espada' (of the cloak and sword), which were founded on subjects selected from fashionable life, and exhibited the manners of the age then present. In the course of time a kind of prologue, called a 'Commendation,' was introduced; there were also interludes, styled 'Entremeses,' which, when accompanied with music and dancing, were denominated 'Saynetes.'

The heroic or historical comedies of Lope de Vega were calculated to maintain among the people a lively remembrance of their ancient national records, and in this respect answered the purpose once served by the romances of antiquity. One of these comedies, entitled the 'Battlements of Toro,' in which the Cid makes a conspicuous figure, may be regarded as a good specimen of this class. The subject is the death of Don Sancho II., a story which furnished materials for several of the old romances.

The drama opens with a view of the town of Toro in Leon, and the surrounding country. The king, the Cid, and Count Anzures appear, and his majesty explains to them that important reasons of state forbid him to fulfil his father's will, and that he cannot allow his sisters, Elvira and Urraca, to remain in possession of the fortresses of Toro and Zamora. The Cid, with noble frankness, expostulates against this injustice of the king, and offers himself to act as a mediator between the parties. Don Sancho and Count Anzures then retire, and the Cid advances to the walls. He meets Ordoñez, a knight, coming out of the fortress to execute some enterprise in favour of the Infanta Elvira, and they are about to fight, but they recognise each other and embrace:—

'Cid. Do you expect that I will fight with you?

Ordoñez. And wherefore not?

C.

Because my valiant steel

Has never yet been stained with coward's blood!

- Q. I am no coward; none on earth I fear
 Save one, before whom you would tremble too.
 C. Then he is Winter; in a spot unsheltered
 Before his chilly blast perhaps I'd tremble.
 Q. Nay, he's a man—no other than the Cid.
 C. If that be he whom both of us must fear,
 Then must I fear myself, for I'm the Cid!
 Q. You are the Cid!
 C. The Cid, by God, I am!
 Q. Well, since you've said it to my face,
 I tell you, Cid invincible, my fear,
 That I am Don Diego Ordñez.'

The Infanta appears on the walls, and states to the Cid her reasons for not surrendering the place to her brother. The king reappears, and gives orders to storm the garrison. The scene now changes: Don Vela, an aged knight, who has retired from public life, is seen in front of his country-house soliloquising at the pleasures of his retreat. His daughter enters, surrounded by a rustic group singing. This scene introduces a romantic episode, of which the hero is a Prince of Burgundy, disguised as a peasant, who falls in love with the young lady. The scene again changes, and presents the battlements of Toro, where Elvira once more appears, and converses personally with the king, but without coming to any amicable conclusion. Don Sancho instantly orders the scaling-ladders to be brought, and the attack commences, but the besiegers are repulsed. With this the first act closes.

In the commencement of the second, the rural episode becomes more closely connected with the main action. Don Bellido Dolfos prevails on the king to promise him the hand of the Infanta Elvira on condition of his obtaining possession of the fortress. He succeeds in his enterprise by dint of treachery; and the king, making an excuse that perfidy should not be rewarded by good faith, refuses to fulfil his promise. Dolfos meditates revenge. Meanwhile Elvira, assuming the disguise of a peasant, escapes from Toro, and finds refuge in the house of Don Vela. The action proceeds with this combination of the heroic, the rural, and the amorous, till Dolfos assassinates the king; an incident, however, which does not take place on the stage. The Infanta Elvira returns to Toro, where she receives the homage of her subjects; and the Burgundian prince, avowing his real character, is united to the daughter of Don Vela. It will be remembered that, according to the ancient romance, the Cid obliged Alphonso, the successor of Don Sancho, to take a solemn oath that he was *not* the contriver of his brother's death. If we may believe this drama, he could do so with a clear conscience.

Lope de Vega's comedies 'de Capa y Espada' are romantic pictures drawn from real life. They present the same interest with respect to the situations, and the same regularity in the composition of the scenes, that we remark in his historical plays; but they are generally deficient in the well-marked delineation of character. Every other consideration seems to be sacrificed to the twisting and twining of the thread of the story, till the author, desiring to bring his piece to an end, cuts the knots which he cannot untie, and marries as many couples as he can possibly match. As for morality, we must not look for it here. The object of the poet was to describe fashionable manners as he found them, not as he wished them; and he leaves the spectator to form his own judgment. The life and soul of these dramas is an exuberant gallantry, slightly restrained by notions of honour, but never by a sense of moral duty; and passion is depicted in all the impetuosity of the national character, scarcely veiled with what we should consider sufficient decorum. In Lope's time the favourite maxim of the gay world at Madrid was that 'Love excuses everything,' and on its authority his young heroes and heroines plunge headlong into intrigue, and indulge in the lowest artifice and the basest perfidy. The cavalier draws his sword on the slightest provocation, and if he kills his opponent it seems a matter of very little consequence. The general forms of character are here faithfully embodied, but there is a good deal of sameness among them: the standing ones being the old man, the lover, and the young lady, with a suitable array of servants and waiting-maids; so that when we have read one or two of Lope de Vega's comedies we are acquainted with the whole world which he describes. The endless variety of this prolific writer is found in the plots and incidents. We select as a specimen of this class the comedy entitled 'The Widow of Valencia.' The scene is laid in that city during the Carnival. Leonarda is a rich, young, and handsome widow, who has resolved never to marry, but to live according to her own fancy. She enters with a book in her hand, and talks very sensibly to her maid about the pleasures of reading. The sly attendant contrives so to turn the conversation, that notwithstanding her boasted wisdom, and her utter scorn of admiration, the young widow begins to turn her attention to the mirror, and is in the very act of admiring herself, when she is surprised and disconcerted by the appearance of her uncle. The old gentleman quietly expresses his opinion, that she does well to satisfy herself of the power of her charms by personal inspection. He begins to talk to her of marriage; but the widow in reply sketches a burlesque picture of a Madrid beau, and adverts to the miseries of imprudent matches. The uncle takes his leave, and the scene

changes. It is the outside of Leonarda's mansion, where three of her admirers have met, and are expressing their hopes and desires in sonnets replete with longwinded metaphors. None of them boast of having gained her affections: they candidly acknowledge their failure, and each describes some burlesque adventure which has occurred to him outside of the house during the night. One relates how he was, as he thought, stabbing a rival, and found that he had thrust his poniard into a skin of wine that had been stolen. Meanwhile Leonarda returns somewhat hastily from church, where, in spite of her resolution, she has fallen desperately in love. To avoid compromising her dignity, a plan must be devised whereby the young gentleman, whose name is Camillo, may visit her without knowing who she is. Urbano, her coachman, who is the buffoon of the piece, undertakes to manage this, and goes in quest of Camillo. Meanwhile the other three suitors, unknown to each other, adopt various disguises—as dealers in books, prints, and pictures, and they arrive almost simultaneously at the house. Each obtains an interview in order to dispose of his goods, and embraces the opportunity to avow his passion. An amusing enough scene ensues, in the precipitate retreat which they are obliged to make to avoid being roughly handled by the servants, who are summoned by their mistress.

In the second act Camillo is prevailed on to engage in the adventure. He is dressed by the coachman in a doctor's cloak; the hood is drawn over his eyes, and he is thus conducted blindfold through numerous turnings and windings to the house of the widow. This is another very comical scene. Leonarda receives him in the dark, but lights are afterwards brought, and a sumptuous collation is served. The lady remains masked, and the gentleman's perturbation is such that he cannot taste a morsel. He compares himself to Alexander the Great, receiving the suspected cup from the hand of his physician. After a dialogue full of tender affection, the hood is again drawn over Camillo's face, and he is led back to his own residence. The intrigue is thus carried on for days and weeks without the cavalier discovering either the name or the residence of his mistress. But the three rejected admirers, still mixing in the plot, become jealous of the coachman, and after several spirited scenes between them, an affray occurs, in which one of the suitors of Leonarda is wounded. This accident occasions the dénouement; and Camillo, recognising in his unknown mistress the beautiful but hitherto invincible Leonarda, receives her hand with joy and gratitude.

The spiritual dramas of Lope de Vega afford a no less faithful picture of the religious ideas prevalent in Spain during the sixteenth century. They are a heterogeneous mixture of bright

examples of piety, according to the views of the Romish Church, and the wildest flights of imagination, ennobled and combined into a whole by a fine poetic spirit. As for the characters, we have buffoons, saints, peasants, students, princes, God the Father, the infant Saviour, the Virgin, the Devil, and a host of allegorical personages—the most motley assembly that the wildest imagination could bring together. The lives of the saints exhibit a larger portion of the dramatic spirit than the '*Autos Sacramentales*,' but the allegory connected with the latter imparts a higher dignity to its religious mysticism. The spiritual comedy entitled '*The Life of St Nicolas de Tolentino*,' a saint of modern creation, opens with a conversation maintained by a party of students displaying their wit and erudition. Among them is the future saint, who appears to the greater advantage amidst the disorderly gaiety of his companions. Satan, in disguise, joins the party; a skeleton appears in the air; the heavens open; and the Almighty is seen on a throne of judgment, attended by Justice and Mercy, alternately influencing his decisions. Next occurs a love affair between a gentleman named Feniso and a lady named Rosalia. Nicolas re-enters in canonicals, and delivers a sermon, which is in the form of redondillas, while his parents congratulate themselves on the honour of possessing such a son. Thus closes the first act. At the opening of the second we are introduced to a party of soldiers; the saint enters accompanied by several monks, and offers a prayer in the form of a sonnet. One of the brethren relates the romantic history of his own conversion; and numerous anecdotes of the lives of saints ensue, interspersed with abstruse theological arguments. St Nicolas prays again in a sonnet, the most beautiful that occurs in this sacred farce; and while thus engaged he rises upwards to heaven by the power of faith, as it would appear, but really by the aid of theatrical machinery, which was now making rapid progress. The Holy Virgin and St Augustine descend from heaven to meet him. The scene of the third act opens in Rome, where two cardinals are exhibiting to the people the holy cerecloth by torchlight. Music and pious exhortations add to the solemnity of the scene. St Nicolas next appears embroidering the habit of his order, and giving utterance to pious ejaculations, which are accompanied by the chanting of invisible angels. The devil, attracted by the music, hastens to the spot, and suggests grievous temptations to the saint. The next scene is laid in purgatory, where Satan appears, attended by lions, serpents, and other hideous animals; and a monk, armed with a great broom, drives away the archfiend and his suite. At the close of the drama St Nicolas, whose beatification is now complete, descends from heaven, clothed in a vestment bespangled with stars; and as

soon as he touches the earth, the souls of his father and mother are released from purgatory, and rise to meet him. The saint returns hand in hand with his parents to heaven, the theatrical music accompanying their ascent.

The plays of Lope de Vega were universally read and performed throughout Spain during the seventeenth century. They were at first published singly, but the most popular were afterwards collected into twenty-five volumes, partly during the life and partly after the death of the author. These did not include the 'Autos,' the preludes, and the interludes, which subsequently formed a separate publication in twelve volumes. It would require a considerable volume to give anything like a particular account of his other poetic works—it is to his dramas alone that he owes his immortality.

CONTINUATION OF THE SPANISH DRAMA:—CALDERON.

Lope de Vega had now become the model of Spanish dramatists, and they soon appeared as numerous and as prolific as if Spain had been obliged to supply all the theatres in the world with new plays. Honourable mention is made of 'Cristoval de Virues, a native of Valencia, usually distinguished by his military title of Captain. He was contemporary with Cervantes and Lope de Vega, and was one of those by whom the last attempts were made to separate comedy from tragedy. The latter was his forte, and his pieces are distinguished by a pure poetic spirit and a bold energetic style. He had not the fertile imagination of Lope; but, like him, he was every inch a Spaniard, and obeyed the influence of the national taste, instead of allowing his own genius free scope, or conforming it to classic rules. His 'Semiramis' is crude both in conception and execution, but it approaches the tragic pathos of Cervantes in the 'Numantia.' 'The Cruel Cassandra' is more finished and systematic, and might, by a good dramatist, be rendered a masterpiece of tragedy. Those peculiarities which a cultivated taste would consider as faults in the work, are perfectly in unison with the spirit of the Spanish drama, and it is therefore difficult to explain why it did not obtain greater popularity, except on the ground that the tragic character is sustained throughout without the intervention of comic scenes to relieve the feelings.

Another eminent dramatist of this period was Juan Perez de

Montalvan, who began so early as his seventeenth year to write plays in the style of Lope, and was considered by him as his first pupil. His pieces are neither more systematic nor more finished than those of his master, but they exhibit traces of fine talent for painting dramatic character. In one of his comedies the amiable Henry IV. is drawn to the life. He and Marshal Biron are rivals in a love-affair, and the latter, with a soldier's frankness, avowing his attachment for the lady, the king consents to give place to him, without appearing deeply affected by the sacrifice.

Though Montalvan died at the age of thirty-five; he was the author of nearly a hundred plays.

We pass over others who followed in the same track, to notice more particularly the Spanish poet to whom his countrymen have given the appellation of the prince of dramatists. Pedro Calderon de la Barca was descended from a noble family, and born in the year 1600. He is said to have written for the stage before he had completed his fourteenth year. Having finished his university course at an early age, he attached himself, according to the custom of the times, to some noble patrons at the court of Madrid. Not satisfied, however, with this mode of coming before the world, he entered the army, and served in several campaigns in Italy and the Netherlands. Meanwhile his fame as a dramatic poet increased; and Philip IV., who was passionately fond of the theatre, and had himself published several plays anonymously, conceived that he had found in Calderon a man capable of giving *éclat* to the court theatricals. He summoned him to Madrid, invested him with the military order of St Iago, and attached him permanently to his court. The taste of Calderon was consulted in all preparations for public festivities, and he often furnished dramatic pieces expressly for such occasions. It was expected of him that his dramas in general should be such as demanded considerable scenic splendour, so as to be suitable to the courtly circles who were to witness them; and no expense was spared in representing them with pomp and brilliancy. In his fifty-second year Calderon took holy orders, and thenceforth applied himself almost exclusively to the composition of the religious plays called '*Autos Sacramentales*.' At an advanced period in his life he received a highly complimentary letter from the Duke of Veraguas, in which his grace begged of him a complete list of his plays, because the booksellers were in the habit of selling the works of inferior authors under his name. In reply, Calderon furnished a list of his '*autos sacramentales*' alone, sixty-eight in number. This was accompanied with a letter, intimating that he considered all his other works as idle and unworthy of his genius; that he was determined to follow the example of the booksellers, and

pay as little respect to his temporal plays as they did; for they not only circulated others in his name, but had so altered the titles of his own that he himself could not recognise them. Nevertheless, when his friend Juan de Vera Tassis undertook to publish a complete edition of his dramatic works, the aged author assisted him so far as to authenticate all that are to be found in that collection. He died two years after, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. According to his biographers he had written above 120 tragedies and comedies, 100 sacred allegorical pieces, and 100 humorous interludes.

Calderon may be said to have brought the style of Lope de Vega to perfection, and to have given the last polish to the genuine Spanish drama without altering its nature. He was equally ingenious with Lope in the construction of plots and the combination of incidents. If his invention was less bold, it was also less rude; and with respect to all that may be called refinement, either in conception or execution, he opened for himself a sphere entirely new. The delicacy of his art is particularly observable in his delineation of character, which is very superior to that of Lope. Not that he depicts individual character instead of its general forms, for these had now become naturalised on the Spanish stage, and had usurped the place of individuality; but he abounds in characteristic traits, and shows himself to have been a particularly acute observer of female mind and manners. This accuracy of observation was admirably adapted to the nicety of his complicated intrigues, while the elegance of his language and versification gives harmony to the whole. To the classic eye, these dramas appear irregular enough, but they are perfectly true to the rules which the author prescribed to himself.

The heroic or historic dramas of Calderon are, of all his productions, the most unequal in merit. He succeeded only when he selected his materials from the annals of his own country; his genius was far too national, it may be said too impetuous, to adapt itself to foreign manners; and when he has transferred to the Spanish stage subjects either from Northern Europe or from the ancient history of Greece and Rome, the effect is generally poor. He was particularly happy in painting the early scenes of Spanish history; and the spectators imagined they saw on the stage a revival of that national glory which, after threatening the whole world, was now becoming extinct; the ear was at the same time gratified by poetry in which was combined all the harmony of the most varied metres, with a prodigality of figure which the Spanish tongue alone permitted. These were among the happiest efforts of Calderon's genius. We select for analysis a historical drama entitled '*El Principe Constante*' ('The Constant,' or rather

'the Inflexible Prince'), or as we might say, the 'Portuguese Regulus.' It is considered one of the best tragedies that Spain has produced; and having been translated by Schlegel, an enthusiastic admirer of Calderon, it has been performed with much success in Germany. The unities of time and place in this drama are lost sight of in the unity of the heroic action, into which the purest spirit of pathos has been infused, without departing from the national style of heroic comedy. Don Fernando, a Portuguese prince, accompanied by his brother Don Henrique, lands on the coast of Barbary at the head of an army destined for the conquest of Tangiers. The first scene is laid in the gardens of the king of Fez, where some Christian slaves have been summoned to sing for the entertainment of their mistress Fenicia, a Moorish princess. 'How,' they ask in reply, 'can our songs appear sweet when accompanied only by the clank of our fetters?' They sing, nevertheless; and presently the princess appears in the midst of her women, who praise her beauty with that Oriental extravagance of hyperbole which would be absurd in any other European language. Fenicia repels their flattery, and speaks of a hidden grief, arising from a hopeless but unconquerable affection. The object of her love is Muley Sheik, the cousin of the king of Fez, and the commander of his fleet and army; but her father has expressed his desire that she should marry Tarudant, Prince of Morocco. She is in the midst of the distress arising from this intimation, when Muley comes to announce to the king the arrival of the Portuguese fleet. He receives orders to oppose the landing, and this encounter is the subject of the next scene. Some evil omens have occurred to the Christian host during the voyage, and Fernando is endeavouring to dispel from the hearts of his knights the superstitious fear which has been the consequence, when he is attacked by Muley Sheik at the head of a small body of cavalry, which has been hastily collected. Fernando obtains an easy victory, and Muley himself falls into his hands; but on learning the critical position of his captive with respect to the object of his affections, and the danger he is in of losing her for ever, the generous conqueror sets him free without ransom. Meanwhile the kings of Fez and Morocco have assembled their troops, and advance with an overwhelming force. The Christians are vanquished. They are not even permitted the honour of dying on the field; and Fernando, after a brave struggle, surrenders to the king of Fez. His brother Henry follows his example, with the flower of the Portuguese army. The Moorish king treats them with the utmost courtesy, but declares that he cannot release them unless he obtains the restitution of Ceuta. He sends Henry back to announce to the Portuguese

monarch, the elder brother of the prince, the condition required. Fernando is unwilling that his liberty should cost country his most brilliant conquest, and he charges Horatio with his brother that he is a Christian and a Christian. Here the first act closes. At the opening of the second Fernando appears surrounded by Christian captives, who indulge the sensation of being liberated with him. Fernando does not end their hopes:—

‘*Heaven only knows, my fellow-countrymen,
How gladly I would see your fathers broken,
If I should wish my freedom up for yours.
But it is vain!*’ and death a happier lot
Shall quickly prove to us. Pardon me, friends;
The weakness, well I know, excites not words
But death. Alas, it is not in my power
To set you free. But enough: run to your tasks,
Lest we should stir the anger of your masters.’

The king of Fez prepares a banquet for his prisoner, and in the evening, after a hunting excursion, assures him that he considers him as a prisoner to the man who desires them. Mean while, the king returns, bringing tidings that the king has died in the defeat at Tangiers, but in his last moments he has ordered Ceuta for the redemption of the prisoners, and this has been approved by his successor Alphonso V. Don Henriquez then addresses him:—

‘*Henry, forbear! thy language would disgrace
The lowest of barbarians, destitute
Of Christian faith; much more a princely son
Of Portugal, a soldier of the Cross.
’Tis plain to me, that in his dying will
The king inserted this most strange condition,
Not that fulfilled it should be to the letter,
But that it should be known how much his heart
A brother’s freedom prized. But other means
Must be employed to seek it—peace or war.
How could a Christian prince with honour yield
A city to the Moors bought with the price
Of his own blood? For he it was who first,
Armed with a slender buckler and his sword,
Planted our country’s banner on its walls.
But grant we overlook this valiant deed;
Shall we forsake a city that hath reared
Within its walls now temples to our God?
Our faith, religion, Christian piety,
Our country’s honour, all forbid the deed.*

What! shall those mansions of the Living God
 Receive the Moorish crescent? shall their walls
 Re-echo to the insulting coursers' hoof
 Lodged in the sacred courts, or to the creed
 Of unbelievers? Where our God hath fixed
 His dwelling, shall we drive his people forth?
 Shall we expose the faithful who inhabit
 The town, our new possession, to the wiles
 That haply might induce them to abjure
 Their faith? Shall we expose the Christian youth
 To be instructed by the infidels
 In their own barbarous rites? And is it meet
 So many perish to redeem one man
 From bondage? And what am I but a man?
 A man now reft of his nobility;
 No more a prince or soldier—a mere slave!
 And shall a slave at such a dreadful price
 Redeem his life? Look down upon me, king,
 Behold thy slave, who asks not to be free;
 Such ransom I abjure! Henry, return;
 And tell our countrymen that thou hast left
 Thy brother buried on the Afric shore;
 For life is here indeed a living death!
 Christians, henceforth believe Fernando dead!
 Moors seize your slave! My captive countrymen,
 Another comrade joins your hapless band!
 Monarch, kind brother, Moors, and Christians, all
 Bear witness to a prince's constancy,
 Whose love of God, his country, and his faith,
 O'erlived the frowns of fortune! * *

The king replies—

'Proud and ungrateful prince, and is it thus
 Thou spurn'st my favour, thus repay'st my kindness?
 Deniest my sole request? Perhaps thou here
 Deemest thyself sole ruler, and wouldst sway
 My kingdom. But henceforth thou shalt be known
 By that vile name thou hast thyself assumed—
 A slave! thou shalt be treated as a slave!
 Thy brother and thy countrymen shall see
 Thee lick the dust, and kiss my royal feet!'

After vain solicitation and expostulation, the king summons
 officer—

'Hence with this captive, rank him with the rest;
 Bind on his neck and limbs a heavy chain;

* Roscoe's Translation of Sismondi's 'Littérature du Midi de l'Europe.'

My horses, bath, and garden be his care;
By abject tasks let his proud heart be humbled!
Away with his silk mantle; be his dress
That of a slave! His food the blackest bread;
Water his drink; his bed a chilly cell;
And let his servants share their master's fate.'

Fernando is next seen in the garden labouring among the other slaves. Don Juan Coutinho, Count of Miralva, one of the Portuguese knights, vows not to leave him, and makes him known to his fellow-prisoners, all of whom do him homage in the midst of their sufferings. Muley Sheik now arrives, and contriving to be alone with Fernando, assures him that loyalty and honour make their loved abode in the heart of a Moor, and that he has come not to confer a favour, but to discharge a debt. He then hastily informs him where he will find in his prison instruments for breaking his fetters; that he himself will burst the window bars; and that a vessel will be ready at the shore to bear him home. The king enters at this moment; but, far from suspecting the subject of their intercourse, he commits to Muley the custody of the Prince Fernando, and engages him by every tie of honour and duty to fulfil his orders concerning him, expressing his confidence that he alone is above all corruption. Muley feels that his position is now changed; he hesitates between honour on the one hand and gratitude on the other; and he consults Fernando as to the path of duty. The prince decides against himself, refusing to avail himself of any means of escape, and Muley submits at last with regret to what appears to be the law of duty and of honour. At the commencement of the third act we find him employing another method, and imploring the compassion of the king on behalf of Fernando. He gives an affecting picture of the condition to which the unhappy captive is reduced: sleeping in a damp dungeon; occupied in the most servile labour; pining with hunger, and sinking under disease. Our stage would not suffer even an allusion to some of the details of misery that here occur. The king hears these revolting particulars, but considering them only as the result of the prince's own obstinacy, he simply replies, 'Tis well, Muley.' Fenicia in her turn comes to intercede, but her father commands her to be silent. An ambassador from Morocco and another from Portugal are announced, and they turn out to be Taradant and Alphonso V., who, availing themselves of the protection of the law of nations, have come to negotiate their several interests in person. Alphonso offers, as his brother's ransom, money to twice the amount of the value of the city of Ceuta, and declares that if it be refused his forces are ready to waste Africa with fire and sword; Taradant expresses his readi-

ness to meet him with the army of Morocco, and repel his threatened invasion; while the king of Fez persists in refusing to liberate Fernando on any other terms than the restitution of Ceuta. He bestows Fenicia on his ally, and orders Muley to attend her to Morocco. Muley prepares to obey, notwithstanding the pain it gives him to abandon his friend in his misery, and the still greater agony he must feel in assisting at the nuptials of his mistress.

The scene changes, and Don Fernando is carried in on a mat and laid on the ground, overcome by the weight of slavery, disease, and misery. He speaks, however, of his sufferings as mercifully appointed trials, and returns thanks to Heaven for every pang as the pledge of his approaching beatification. Meanwhile the king, with Tarudant and Fenicia, pass through the street where he is lying. 'Bestow your alms,' cries Don Fernando, 'on a poor sufferer, a human being like yourselves. I am sick, and poor, and dying of hunger.' The king tells him that his wellbeing depends on himself alone; that the terms are still the same, and that his misery results only from obstinacy. The reply of Fernando is truly Oriental. In explaining that mercy is the first duty of kings, he shows that every class of creation bears emblems of royalty: the lion, the monarch of beasts; the eagle of birds; the dolphin of fish; the pomegranate of fruits; the diamond of minerals; and he cites traditions to show that the virtue of generosity has always been attached to each of these emblems. He reminds the king farther, that as a man he is allied to him by his royal blood, notwithstanding the difference in their creed, and that cruelty is alike condemned by every religion. Still while the prince believes it his duty thus to expostulate, he desires not life but martyrdom, which he expects at the hands of the king. 'When you pity yourself, Don Fernando,' replies the monarch, 'I will pity you too.' After the Moorish princes have retired, Juan Coutinho brings him bread; and the prince, feeling his end approach, begs that he may be invested in holy garments, as he is the grandmaster of a religious and military order. He expresses his assurance of entering the mansions of the blessed, grounded partly, it would appear, on the fact that he had consecrated so many churches to the divine service on earth. His companions then bear him away in their arms. The scene changes. It is the coast of Africa, and the Portuguese troops, headed by Alphonso and Henry, have just landed. The shade of the deceased Fernando, in the habit of his order, appears to them, and promises victory. The scene again changes, and the king appears on the walls of Fez surrounded by his guards. The coffin of Don Fernando is brought forward by Juan Coutinho,

At night, and military music is heard in the shade of Fernando appears with a torch in his hand, and conducts the Portuguese army beneath the walls. He tells the king that he has vanquished his ally Tarugo, and that he has taken him to Morocco with Fenicia, and that both are now prisoners. He is willing to exchange them for his brother. The king is in deep distress, for Fernando is now no longer his ally. He is obliged to tell Alphonso; but the Portuguese monarch is determined to recover even his mortal remains, and for these he will give up Fenicia and all the other prisoners; only on condition that she shall be given in marriage to Muley Sheik, as a reward to the brave Moor for his past kindness. This is consented to, and Alphonso commits to the care of his vicar-general the relics of the newly-canonised saint of Portugal.

It may do for poetry; but the historical records of the sixteenth century, published by authority, inform us that Fernando's continued captivity was owing to the troubles in Portugal, and the jealousy of the reigning princes; that he remained a prisoner about five years, during which he experienced no ill-treatment; and that his remains were not redeemed for thirty years afterwards.

In the *Comedias de Capa y Espada*, the plots of Calderon are the most part so intricate that none but a Spaniard, who is accustomed to this kind of mental exercise, can follow the various details of the intrigue at the first perusal or representation. This author excelled in the accumulation of surprises; in plunging his principal characters into one difficulty after another, and maintaining the strongly-excited interest undiminished to the last. In order to do this, he paid still less attention than Lope de Vega to probability in the succession of the scenes, and his characters came and retire just as suits his own convenience. The Spaniards could pardon everything of this sort, if it produced a new and replete with dramatic truth. The *dramatis personae* of Calderon are very few, and the same under different names for all his different pieces. They differ in no material point from those we mentioned in speaking of Lope de Vega. The tone of feeling also is the same. The motive on which he turns is a licentious gallantry; the romantic accessories are duels and murders; the mysteries are night scenes; and the passions of anger and jealousy are allowed full scope. Modern writers, in their zeal for the principles of the drama, have charged Calderon with insulting the whole nation, by representing it as composed of romantic coxcombs and intriguing coquettes. It does not follow, however, that he portrays no other class of contemporary character,

that he believed no other existed; but that this certainly was a conspicuous class in Madrid, and the one which of all others the multitude chose to see represented in the fury of their passions and the ingenuity of their artifices. Until within the last half-century, the characters of the fictitious literature of England were almost exclusively taken from the higher walks of life; but a foreigner would egregiously err who should thence conclude that there were neither peasants, nor tradesmen, nor artisans in this country till within a few years ago, when the taste for tales about lords and ladies had gone out of fashion, and those were most in request which described the working-classes. It has also been remarked, that he has violated nature in these comedies, by putting lofty poetic language into the mouths of valets and ladies'-maids. Thus in the play entitled '*Misfortune Comes Well if it Comes Alone*,' a maid addresses her young mistress, who has risen in cheerful mood, by saying, 'that Aurora would not have done wrong had she continued to sleep in her snowy crystal that morning, because the light of her mistress' charms would have sufficed to draw aside the curtains from the couch of Sol.' But the servants of the seventeenth century were much less removed in this respect from their masters and mistresses than are those of the present day. Whenever romantic gallantry had occasion to speak in the tone of tenderness or admiration, every idea, according to Spanish usage, became a metaphor; and Calderon, who was a thorough Spaniard, gave the rein to his fancy when such opportunities occurred. This style of language, be it remembered, was a vernacular property of the ancient national poetry which arose among the people, and was never the exclusive property of the aristocracy. A less pardonable defect is that of employing servants to bring out stale jests, and meaningless puns; but it seems that buffoonery and servants' jests were considered indispensable in this kind of comedy; and the fault seems to have lain in the taste of the public rather than in that of the poet.

The religious dramas of Calderon abound in fine poetry and wild creations of the imagination. It must be admitted that they are deeply founded on the bigotry and superstition of the author's creed, and that they assign to the Christian religion morals more corrupt and passions more ferocious than any other writer has dared to place under such sacred auspices. Two of the most ingenious of these compositions are the '*Devotion of the Cross*' and the '*Purgatory of St Patrick*.' In the former, we have a professed brigand and assassin erecting the sign of the cross over each of his victims, and bearing its impress also on his breast; and though he is cut off in the midst of his crimes, yet because of his reverence for this sacred symbol he is reanimated, in order to confess him-

self and receive absolution. His sister, more abandoned, and, if possible, more ferocious than himself, is on the point of being apprehended and paying the penalty of her iniquities, when she throws her arms round a cross, which rises into the skies and bears her away from merited vengeance. The immorality of the Spanish comedies of intrigue have been partially excused on the ground that the poet portrayed, without approving, the morals which he found prevailing in a certain circle. But here the grossest immorality is depicted under the sanction of religion, and the deepest crimes are retrieved by an attention to trivial ceremonies.

The opinions of critics are greatly at variance with respect to the general merit of Calderon's works. The bright poetic glow of his imagination, and the captivating music of his verse are admitted by all; but while the Spanish and German critics perceive no serious drawback on these excellences, the French complain bitterly of the exuberance of his images, his incongruities and anachronisms, and above all, his frightful immorality and impiety. These charges are but too just according to our views of propriety; and it must be considered a proof of corruption, both in taste and morals, having made considerable progress in Spain, that these things did not appear serious defects, and were not effectually marked with public disapprobation in the age that gave birth to this most gifted of Spanish poets.

In consequence of the popularity attained by Lope de Vega and Calderon, the passion for composing dramas became as epidemic as that for writing sonnets had formerly been. The fecundity of Perez de Montalvan, who had written nearly a hundred plays before reaching his thirty-fifth year, was not permitted to remain a solitary example; and we are better furnished with the means of estimating the number of dramas produced at this time than of judging their merits. No one seemed to think of improving the principles of Spanish comedy, or to aim at distinguishing himself by any particular originality. The very few who obtained celebrity were those who endeavoured to attain greater regularity of composition than Calderon, with equal ingenuity and refinement. Such were Antonio de Solís, still more famous as a historian; Augustin Moreto and Juan de Hoz, who excelled in comic character; Tirso de Molina, the reputed author of upwards of seventy plays still extant; Francisco de Rojas, celebrated for the complexity of his plots; Augustin de Salazar y Torres, who adopted the affected style of Gongora; Antonio Mira de Mescua; and others too numerous even to mention.

Some attempts have been made to form an estimate of the number of Spanish dramas which this age produced. La Huerta

has enumerated 3852, of which the greater part belongs to the time of Calderon. But even if this list contains all the printed plays known to the literary world, it may be presumed that those remaining in manuscript are vastly more numerous; for be it remembered that of the 2000 pieces even of the idolised Lope de Vega, only about 300 were committed to the press.

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DIDACTIC SATIRE.

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THE BROTHERS LEONARDO DE ARGENSOLA.

Among the poets of this period, a high rank must be assigned to these two brothers, who have been styled the Horaces of Spain. They belonged to an honourable family of Italian origin, but residing in Arragon. Lupercio, the eldest, was born in 1565, and in his twentieth year was the author of three tragedies, which were performed with success. But his poetic fame does not rest upon these; his enthusiastic admiration of Horace led him to abandon dramatic writing for a sphere in which he could imitate his favourite, and he was eminently successful. After being secretary to the Empress Maria, and chamberlain to the Archduke Albert, he was appointed royal historiographer of Arragon by Philip III. He was afterwards induced to visit Italy with the Count de Lemos, and was appointed secretary of state and of war for Naples; but amidst the various and onerous duties of this office he prosecuted his poetic labours, and continued his Arragonese annals. He died in 1613, and, like Virgil, burned a considerable portion of his poetry when he felt his end approaching.

Bartolomé, the younger Leonardo de Argensola, was born in 1566, and entered the church. It was his lot to be appointed chaplain to the various parties whom Lupercio served as secretary, so that the two brothers pursued their career in the closest companionship so long as the elder lived. But Bartolomé survived him eighteen years, dying at Saragossa in 1631. Such was the extraordinary similarity of character, taste, and talent, in these two brothers, that in a critical point of view the poetry of the Argensolas is considered as one, and in some cases it is impossible to distinguish their compositions. They are not remarkable for

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power of thought, but they possess far more talent for description, a classic dignity of language, and a purer taste. They laboured with Luis de Leon to form their style after him, though their conception never has anything like his. Their works are marked by Horatian moderation, especially of the younger, are characterised rather than gaiety, and are replete with good and mild philanthropy. The Argensolas are the most correct of all the Spanish poets except Leon, and the first to attempt didactic satire. One of the 'Conquest of the Moluccas,' written by order of the Count de Lemos, who was of the Council of the Indies, is considered one of the best of the minor Spanish histories, being replete with those which the Portuguese found among the natives, and all adventures that followed their occupation of the East. Unfortunately, however, the authority on which these rest is very uncertain, and some of the stories are so much enough to be suspected of being the invention of the historian.

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## EPIC POETRY.

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### ERCILLA.

Among the unsuccessful attempts at epopee, we must notice the 'Arcuana' of Alonzo de Ercilla y Zuniga; a poem which, for want of a better epic in the Spanish language, has been placed in the same category with Homer, Virgil, Tasso, Camoens, and Milton, and which has thus become better known beyond the borders than many other Spanish works much more worthy of notice. It awakens, however, great interest in the amiable and humorous author, from the remarkable events of his own biography which it embodies; for, unlike other epic poets, Ercilla is the hero of his own story, and avowedly confines himself to facts.\*

\* This is particularly the case in the first part of the work. In the second, he breaks the thread of the narrative by episodes with supernatural machinery are not well executed.



His characters are portraits from the life; and if his imagination is allowed any exercise, it is chiefly in the grouping of his pictures. The subject he chose was a novel and striking one—the savage tribes of the new world brought into contact with civilised nations; the love of rude independence, on the one hand, in deadly conflict with cruel avarice, superstitious zeal, and misguided heroism on the other. The poetic talent of Ercilla was beneath so rich a subject, and his knowledge of the rules of the epic was very imperfect; but though he failed to produce a good poem, he succeeded in telling an interesting story.

Ercilla was born at Madrid in 1533, and in his childhood became page to Don Philip, afterwards Philip II., whom he accompanied in his travels into Italy, the Netherlands, and England. During their residence in London, consequent on Philip's marriage with Queen Mary, the news arrived that the Araucans, an Indian tribe in South America, had revolted against the Spanish dominion. This insurrection appeared to be of a more serious nature than any of those that had hitherto occurred in the annals of Spanish conquest in the new world; and the charge of subduing the refractory tribe was committed to Geronimo de Alderete, who had come over to England from Peru, and now received the appointment of Adelantado, or military commander of Chili. Ercilla quitted the personal service of the prince, and joined himself to this adventurous expedition, 'girding on his sword,' as he expresses it, 'for the first time in the twenty-first year of his age.' The army, having reached its destination, found that it had undertaken no trifling warfare. Unlike the Indians of the torrid zone, the Araucans were a hardy as well as valiant race; and no less persevering than impetuous in their valour. 'Though possessing,' says Ercilla, 'only a very flat district of country, about twenty leagues in length, without a single town, stronghold, or even wall within it; though surrounded with Spanish fortresses, and themselves without suitable arms for warfare, they made such a gallant stand against the invaders, as resulted not only in the recovery, but the continued maintenance of their independence. Instead of the subjects, they were recognised as the honourable foes, and in process of time the allies and friends of the Spanish monarchy.'\* Here Ercilla had an opportunity of indulging both his love of daring enterprise, and his talent for observing men and manners. In the midst of his exploits he conceived with youthful ambition the project of writing a narrative of this war in the form of an epic poem. After the

\* So constant have the Araucans proved in the friendship thus formed, that in the more recent struggles of Spain with her colonists, they leaned with decided partiality to the cause of the mother-country.

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... of a battle, or the fatigues of a march, he devoted the hours of the night to his literary labour; wielding, as he says, the sword and the pen by turns, and obliged sometimes to write on pieces of skin, or scraps of paper so small as to contain but six lines. Thus he completed the first part of his poem, consisting of three cantos. Thirsting for new adventures, and a more extensive field of observation, he penetrated to the utmost extremity of the South American continent. In company with ten of his fellow-soldiers he twice crossed the dangerous strait of Chiloe in a small boat, and carved on a tree the record of his having been the first to reach the island beyond. Upon his return, Ercilla narrowly escaped a premature and shameful death. At the city of La Imperial, the head-quarters of the Spanish army, it had been thought proper to hold a tournament in honour of the accession of Philip II. to the throne of Spain, the news of which had just arrived. A trial of skill between Ercilla and another soldier, but as was often the case on such occasions, to a serious quarrel, and the martial amusement ended in strife and confusion. Don Garcia Hurtado de Mendoza, having, as it is generally supposed, previously suspected a conspiracy against his authority, and that this was the commencement of the mutiny, and in order to make a salutary example for the maintenance of discipline. The chief actors in the fray were apprehended as ringleaders, and the hasty young general\* ordered them to be beheaded. Ercilla says that he was already on the scaffold, and stretched out his neck for the axe, when Don Garcia was informed by more correct information that the affray had been accidental, and the sentence of death was revoked. He returned to Spain before he was thirty years of age, full of hope both as a soldier and a poet. He dedicated his 'Araucana' to the king, but the gloomy Philip took little notice either of him or his work. Though deeply wounded by this neglect, nothing could diminish the romantic attachment of the poet to his cold-hearted sovereign. The only mark of favour he received was from the Emperor Maximilian II., who appointed him one of his chamberlains; an office, however, of very little pecuniary value. Dissatisfied with his lot, Ercilla travelled about from place to place: the stream of fortune, he says, ran against him; he was destitute and forsaken, though conscious of having merited reward by long and honourable service. His last years were spent in obscurity at Madrid;

\* Suarez de Figueroa, the biographer of Don Garcia, describes the general as a man whom no blame could attach in such a matter, as he was 'of an exceedingly mild and humane disposition, endowed with great equanimity, an acute intellect, and a fine memory; being, moreover, a perfect Christian, a zealous restorer of discipline, highly abstemious, and, to crown all, constantly keeping in his hand his rosary to tell his beads.'

At the time of his death is not exactly known, but it was after he had attained his sixtieth year. *Ercilla* is known to the world only by his '*Araucana*,' and by a few lines of no great merit in '*El Parnaso Español*.'

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GONGORA AND THE CULTORISTS.

The various pupils of the classic school founded by *Boscan* continued to cultivate lyric and bucolic poetry, to which elegant satire was added after the impulse had been given by the *Argensolas*. This school was on the decline in Italy, but it maintained its ground in Spain in spite of the partisans of *Lope de Vega's* irregularity, and of a fantastic sect which at this period attempted to create a new epoch in Spanish poetry, by the opposite extreme of exquisite refinement. Of the latter party we are now to speak. Its founder and idol was *Luis de Góngora*, whose name has become a by-word in literature. He was a man of shrewd and powerful mind, but diverted by a prosecution of the most absurd critical reveries. He was born at Cordova in 1561, and was educated, it is said, for the legal profession. But his tastes were too poetical to allow him to study with success; and after living many years poor and unprotected in his native city, he took holy orders to insure subsistence. Perhaps the struggles with the frowns of fortune in which his whole life was spent, contributed to sharpen that caustic wit for which he was so remarkable. In early life he wrote satirical sonnets, romances, and songs, which have seldom been exceeded in bitterness. In these the language and versification are elegant and correct; and from the piquant simplicity of the style, it could never have been anticipated that the ambition of introducing something new in literature would have betrayed the author into the pretension which afterwards distinguished him. The following is translated by Dr Bowring:—

That's a lie—that's a lie!

'Riches will serve for titles too—

That's true—that's true!

And they love most who oftenest sigh—

That's a lie—that's a lie!

That crowns give virtue—power gives wit,

That follies well on proud ones sit;

That poor men's slips deserve a halter,

While honours crown the great defaulter;

That 'nointed kings no wrong can do,  
 No right such worms as I and you—  
 That's true—that's true !

To say a dull and sleepy warden  
 Can guard a many-portalled garden ;  
 That woes which darken many a day,  
 One moment's smile can charm away ;  
 To say you think that Celia's eye  
 Speaks aught but trick and treachery—  
 That's a lie—that's a lie !

That wisdom's bought and virtue sold ;  
 And that you can provide with gold,  
 For court a garter or a star,  
 And valour fit for peace or war ;  
 And purchase knowledge at the U-  
 Niversity for P. or Q.—  
 That's true—that's true !

They must be gagged who go to court,  
 And bless, besides, the gagger for't ;  
 That rank-less must be scourged, and thank  
 The scourgers when they're men of rank ;  
 The humble poor man's form and hue  
 Deserve both shame and suffering too—  
 That's true—that's true !

But wondrous favours to be done,  
 And glorious prizes to be won ;  
 And downy pillows for our head,  
 And thornless roses for our bed ;  
 From monarch's words—you'll trust and try,  
 And risk your honour on the die—  
 That's a lie—that's a lie !

That he who in the courts of law  
 Defends his person or estate,  
 Should have the privilege to draw  
 Upon the mighty river Plate ;  
 And spite of all that he can do,  
 He will be plucked, and laughed at too—  
 That's true—that's true !

To sow of pure and honest seeds,  
 And gather nought but waste and weeds ;  
 And to pretend our care and toil  
 Had well prepared the ungrateful soil ;  
 And then on righteous heaven to cry,  
 As 'twere unjust—and ask it why ?  
 That's a lie—that's a lie !<sup>13</sup>

\* Obras. Lisboa, ii. p. 56.—Anc. Poet. of Spain, p. 211.



It was probably in a fit of vexation that Gongora conceived the idea of distinguishing himself by the invention of a peculiar poetic phraseology, to be called the *Estilo Culto*, or polished style. In order to accomplish this, he formed with great labour and research an affected, obscure, and ridiculously allegorical language, totally at variance with all the ordinary modes either of speaking or writing. He not only sought the most uncommon words, but attached to common ones a new signification, and laid mythology under contribution for fresh ornaments. He used in Spanish the boldest inversions of the Greek and Latin; and invented a new system of punctuation, to determine the sense. The most obvious feature, however, of the style is, that it consists almost entirely of metaphors heaped upon each other in so grotesque a mass, that it is often difficult to discover the real meaning. Witness the following prose translation of a sonnet which was sent to his friend Luis de Bavia, in commendation of his history of three popes:—

'This poem, which Bavia has now presented to the world, if not tied up in numbers, yet filed down into a wise arrangement, and checked into shape by learning, is a cultivated record, whose gray-headed style, though not metrical, is well combed, and steals three pilots from the sacred bark of the church from the devastations of time, and rescues them from oblivion. But the pen that thus immortalises the heavenly turn-keys on the bronze of its history is not a pen, but the eye of ages. It throws open to their names, not the gates of failing memory which stamps shadows on masses of poem, but the gates of immortality.'

In this manner Gongora wrote his 'Soledades,' his 'Polyphemus,' and several other pieces. In the former he speaks of a maiden so beautiful that she might parch up Norway with her two suns, and reach Ethiopia with her two hands. It is impossible to do justice to this style in translation, because we cannot display in our own language those labyrinths of phrases which make the original so obscure. The following passage, however, has been attempted both in French and English:—

'Twas in the flowery season of the year,  
When fair Europa's spoiler in disguise—  
(On his fierce front his glittering arms arise  
A half-moon's horns, while the sun's rays appear  
Brightening his speckled coat)—the pride of heaven,  
Pastured on stars amid the sapphire fields;  
When he, most worthy of the office given  
To Ida's boy—to hold Jove's cup that yields

Immortal juice—was wrecked in savage sea,  
 Confiding to the waves his amorous pains ;  
 The sea relenting sends the strains  
 To the far leafy groves, glad to repeat  
 Echoes than old Arion's shell more sweet.'

The following stanzas are from 'Polyphemus':—

'Cyclops—terrific son of Ocean's god!—  
 Like a vast mountain rose his living frame;  
 His single eye cast like a flame abroad,  
 Its glances glittering as the morning beam.  
 A mighty pine supported where he trod  
 His giant steps, a trembling twig for him,  
 Which sometimes served to walk with, or to drive  
 His sheep to pasture, where the sea-symphs live.

His jet-black hair in wavy darkness hung,  
 Dark as the tides of the Lethæan deep,  
 Loose to the winds, and shaggy masses clung  
 To his dread face; like a wild torrent's sweep  
 His beard far down his rugged bosom flung  
 A savage veil; while scarce the massy heap  
 Of ropy ringlets his vast hands divide,  
 That floated like the briny waters wide.

Not mountainous Trinacria ever gave  
 Such fierce and unformed savage to the day—  
 Swift as the winds his feet, to chase or brave  
 The forest hordes, whose battle is his play,  
 Whose spoils he bears; o'er his vast shoulders wave  
 Their variegated skins, wont to dismay  
 The shepherds and their flocks. And now he came  
 Driving his herds to fold 'neath the still twilight beam.

With hempen cords and wild bees' wax he bound  
 A hundred reeds, whose music wild and shrill,  
 Repeated by the mountain echoes round,  
 Shook every trembling grove, and stream, and hill.  
 The ocean heaves, the Triton's shells resound  
 No more; the awe-struck vessel's streamers fill  
 With the shook air, and bear in haste away;  
 Such was the giant's sweetest harmony.'

Gongora's labours do not appear to have materially improved his worldly circumstances; for at his death in 1627 he held merely the office of titular chaplain to the king. But he was re-

warded with the profound admiration of a numerous party, between whom and the followers of Lope de Vega there was a sharp contest for public favour. None of his imitators, however, had the native talent of Gongora, and they soon divided into two sects—the first called *Cultoristos*, retaining only the pedantry of their founder; and the second aspiring to his genius by revelling in the wildest regions of fancy, and seeking strange ideas as well as eccentric language. These were called *Conceptistos*, from the *conceptos*, conceptions, or rather conceits, of which they were the authors.

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QUEVEDO.

1580—1645.

The lofty character and fertile genius of the Spanish nation had long lived and flourished in spite of the crushing power of civil despotism, and the still more formidable terrors of the stake and the dungeon. But the energies of the people were at length exhausted, and the national genius blighted. It is true that national crime as yet had been but as a worm at the root of literature, and that the heroes who followed the standards of Ferdinand, Isabella, and Charles V., and who executed the bloody mandates of Philip II., could glory in the talents of Boscan, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and their contemporaries; but the canker had touched even these, and in their successors the decay spread rapidly and widely, till every branch of literature drooped and withered.

Among the last Spanish poets of renown was Don Francisco Gomez de Quevedo y Villegas, a man who, in his actions as well as in his writings, displayed both originality and judgment, but became the victim of the misrule under which he had the misfortune to live.

He was born of a noble family at Madrid in 1580, and was brought up in the palace by his widowed mother, who was one of the ladies of the royal household. She died when he was still very young, and he was sent by his guardian to the university of Alcalá. Here he is said to have obtained the degree of doctor in theology at fifteen years of age, and to have acquired the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, French, and Italian languages, besides pursuing the usual routine of scholastic studies, including theology, law, belles lettres, philology, natural philosophy, and medicine.

He was not only distinguished among students as a prodigy of knowledge, but he acquired in the world the character of an accomplished cavalier. Though born with both his feet turned in, he excelled most men in physical strength, and in the skilful use of weapons. On one occasion a person took advantage of the darkness in which churches are shrouded during Passion-week, to insult a lady attending mass at St Martin's. Though both parties were unknown to Quevedo, he came forward to the lady's assistance, and forced the insulter into the street. There they drew on each other, and Quevedo ran his antagonist through the belly. He turned out to be a distinguished nobleman, and Quevedo was obliged to fly. He took refuge in Italy, and thence, at the invitation of the viceroy, Don Pedro Girón, Duke of Osuna, he repaired to Sicily. Quevedo now became a statesman; he was employed by the duke in the most important affairs of Naples and Sicily, where he established order by his integrity and severity; and he conducted several important embassies to Rome and Madrid. At this time he was frequently pursued by assassins, desiring to rid themselves of one who looked so strictly after abuses. After a brilliant political career, he became involved in the disgrace of the Duke of Osuna. He was arrested, and removed to his country-seat, where he was confined for three years; and so rigorously, that though in bad health, he could not for some time obtain leave to visit a town in the neighbourhood for medical advice. At length, on a strict examination of his papers, Quevedo's innocence was acknowledged, and he was set at liberty. He now demanded indemnification for his wrongs, and the payment of arrears due to him. Instead of obtaining these, he was threatened with renewed exile, and ordered to quit the court. This mandate he found means of evading, and he was even nominated one of the secretaries of the king; but he retired of his own accord to his estate of La Torre de Juan Abad, where he spent many years in tranquillity, devoting himself wholly to literary pursuits. It is probable that about this time he wrote the poems which were published as those of the Bachelor de la Torre, as well as most of his other works, both in poetry and prose. These writings abound in wit and satire, displaying that independence of mind which is seldom welcome in courtly circles; and they kept alive the attention of those who considered themselves the objects of his animadversions. He had now passed fifteen years in comparative quietude, and he seems almost to have forgotten the intrigues of which he was formerly the victim. But he was one of those men who seem marked by destiny for misfortune. He *thus playfully*, yet bitterly, alludes to the ill-luck that seemed to follow him:—



'My fortunes are so black they might serve me for ink; I might be used as an image of a saint. If the country-people want rain, they have only to turn me out of doors, and they are sure of a deluge; if they want sun, let me be well wrapped up in a cloak, and it will shine though it were midnight; I am always mistaken for some object of vengeance, and receive the blows intended for another. If but a tile is to fall, it waits till I pass under. If I would borrow from any one, I meet so rude a reception that, instead of borrowing, I am obliged to lend my patience. Every fool prates to me; every old woman makes love; every poor person begs; every prosperous one is insolent. If I travel, I am sure to miss my way; if I play, I always lose; every friend forsakes, and every enemy sticks to me. I find scarcity of water at the sea, but abundance of it in taverns, mingled with my wine. I have given up all occupation, for I know that if I were to turn hosier, people would go barelegged; and if physician, no one would fall ill. If I am gallant towards a woman, she accepts or refuses me—both are equally disastrous. If a man wished to die neither by poison nor by pestilence, he has but to intend some kindness towards me, and he will not live an hour. So unpropitious is my star that I submit, and endeavour to conciliate its pride by my adoration.'

This evil star induced him once more to visit Madrid, where in 1641 he was arrested at midnight as the author of certain libels against the government, and to the injury of public morals. His estate was confiscated, and he was not permitted even to give information of his apprehension, or to send to his house for a change of linen. He was thrown into a narrow dungeon in a convent, where he remained at least two years in extreme misery. Writing to the Duke of Olivarez to solicit an inquiry into his case, 'A year and ten months,' says he, 'have passed since I was thrown into prison on the eve of the conception of our Lady, at half-past ten at night, when I was dragged in the depth of winter—without a cloak and without a shirt—in my sixty-first year, to this royal convent of San Márcos de Leon, where I have remained all the time mentioned, in the most rigorous confinement; sick with three wounds, which have festered from the effects of cold and the damp arising from a stream that flows near my pillow; and not being allowed a surgeon, it has been a pitiful sight to see me cauterise them with my own hands. So great is my poverty, that my life has been supported by charity; my hardships have struck every one with horror. I have only one sister, a nun among the barefooted Carmelites: I can hope for nothing from her, but that she should commend me to divine compassion. . . . I protest before God, our Lord, that I am guilty of no other crime than not having lived an exemplary life; so that my sins have arisen from my follies.'

I acknowledge—for so my sins persuade—that there is mercy in this cruelty, for I am myself the voice of my conscience, and I accuse my life. I am a corpse in all except the sepulture, which is the repose of the dead. My friends are terrified by my calamity, and no hope is left me except in you. No mercy can bestow many years on me, nor the utmost cruelty deprive me of many. I do not, my lord, seek this interval, which in the course of nature must be short, for the sake of living longer, but of living well for a little while.' This memorial had the effect of drawing attention to his case: the accusation was examined; it was found to have been unfounded; the real author of the libel was ascertained, and Quevedo was liberated. He retired to his country residence, sick and broken-hearted, and died in 1645, in his sixty-sixth year.

Quevedo may, without hesitation, be pronounced the most ingenious of Spanish writers next to Cervantes; and his mind was endowed with a degree of practical judgment which is seldom found in combination with so much versatility. His talent for the rapid composition of verses was scarcely inferior to that of Lope de Vega; and if he could have ruled the taste of the nation, instead of being ruled by it, he might have become, if not a poet of the highest rank, at least a classic writer of unrivalled merit. But he was too early wedded to conventional forms of every kind; it may indeed be said that he was steeped in all the colours of his age; for he had imbibed some portion of all the styles which were at that period struggling for ascendancy in Spain; and lofty as his spirit was in other respects, he does not seem to have felt the independence of native genius. Of all the Spanish writers his mental character bears the greatest resemblance to that of Voltaire. Like him he possessed an inexhaustible vein of pleasantry, a comical gaiety even on serious subjects, the art of compelling the abuses of society to appear before the bar of public opinion; and great versatility both of knowledge and talent, with a passion for attempting every style, and leaving monuments of his genius on every topic. A considerable part of his writings were taken from him in his lifetime, and among these were his theatrical pieces and his historical works, so that he cannot, as he had hoped, lay claim to distinction in every department of literature. But notwithstanding the loss of a number of manuscripts, which have never been recovered, his remains form eleven large volumes, eight of which are prose and three verse.

Quevedo published none of his own poems except those which appeared, as we have mentioned, under the assumed name of the Bachelor de La Torre. After his death, his nephew and heir added what others he could find, but he says that they do not compose the twentieth part of what was written. He arranged

and published them under the names of six of the Muses: there is Clio, the historic, chiefly comprising sonnets on public events; Polyhymnia, the sententious; Melpomene, consisting principally of epitaphs; Erato, 'singing the achievements of love and beauty;' Terpsichore, the light, satirical, and gay—a large portion being in the gipsy language; and Thalia, the most extensive of all, which sings 'de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis.' The following translation of one of Quevedo's sonnets is from the pen of Mr Wiffen:—

The Ruins of Rome.

'Pilgrim, thou look'st in Rome for Rome divine,  
And even in Rome no Rome can find! her crowd  
Of mural wonders is a corse, whose shroud  
And fitting tomb is the lone Aventine.  
She lies where reigned the kingly Palatine,  
And time's worn medals more of ruin show  
From her ten thousand fights than even the blow  
Struck at the crown of her imperial line.  
Tiber alone remains, whose rushing tide  
Waters the town now sepulchred in stone,  
And weeps its funeral with paternal tears:  
Oh Rome! in thy wild beauty, power, and pride,  
The durable is fled; and what alone  
Is fugitive, abides the ravening years!'

The prose works of Quevedo will be noticed in their proper place.

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VILLEGAS.

1596—1669.

Though poets were so numerous in this age that Cervantes represents them as raining in showers from the clouds, yet Spain had no Anacreon till Villegas appeared in 1596. That a poet, imbued at once with the spirit of Anacreon, Horace, and Catullus, should now arise, and gain extensive popularity, was a thing scarcely to be expected; for it seemed as if the resources of amatory poetry were completely exhausted. The works of Villegas, therefore, were received with delight, for the Spanish people, so restricted in the topics of their literature, were yet greedy of literary entertainment.

Estévan Manuel de Villegas was a native of Naxera, in Old Castile, where he was born in 1596. His life was by no means



an eventful one. He studied at Madrid and Salamanca, and so early as his fifteenth year made translations from Anacreon and Horace. He then began to write original Anacreontics, and in his twenty-third year collected and published his various pieces, dedicating them to Philip III. On the death of his father he returned to Naxera, to attend to his little estate, and cultivate his literary tastes. He married a beautiful lady of distinguished family, and having become the father of six children, he was anxious to obtain some office that would so increase his scanty income as to enable him to prosecute various literary schemes which he had in view. But he succeeded only in being appointed to a post of very slender emolument in his native town. Thus it would appear that his genius was checked by his poverty, and that his name did not obtain that celebrity that might have been its reward under happier circumstances.

The following is a translation by Mr Wiffen of a piece which in the original is considered a model of graceful poetry:—

‘I have seen the nightingale  
On a sprig of thyme bewail,  
Seeing the dear nest which was  
Hers alone, borne off, alas !  
By a labourer. I heard,  
For this outrage, the poor bird  
Say a thousand mournful things  
To the wind, which on its wings,  
From her to the guardian sky,  
Bore her melancholy cry,  
Bore her tender tears. She spake  
As if her fond heart would break ;  
One while in a sad sweet note,  
Gurgled from her straining throat,  
She enforced her piteous tale,  
Mournful prayer, and plaintive wail ;  
One while with the shrill dispute  
Quite outwearied, she was mute ;  
Then afresh for her dear brood  
Her harmonious shrieks renewed.  
Now she winged it round and round ;  
Now she skimmed along the ground ;  
Now, from bough to bough in haste,  
The delighted robber chased ;  
And alighting in his path,  
Seemed to say ’twixt grief and wrath,  
“ Give me back, fierce rustic rude !  
Give me back my pretty brood ! ”  
And I saw the rustic still  
Answered, “ *That I never will !* ”



The following sapphic ode is rendered by the same elegant translator :—

To the Zephyr.

' Sweet neighbour of the green, leaf-shaking grove,  
Eternal guest of April, frolic child  
Of a sad sire, life-breath of mother-love,  
Favonius, Zephyr mild !

If thou hast learned like me to love—away !  
Thou who hast borne the murmurs of my cry ;  
Hence—no demur—and to my Flora say—  
Say that " I die."

Flora once knew what bitter tears I shed ;  
Flora once wept to see my sorrows flow ;  
Flora once loved me—but I dread, I dread  
Her anger now !

So may the gods, so may the calm blue sky,  
For the fair time that thou in gentle mirth  
Sport'st in the air, with love benign deny  
Snows to the earth !

So never may the gray cloud's cumbrous sail,  
When from on high the rosy daybreak springs,  
Beat on thy shoulders, nor its evil hail  
Wound thy fine wings !'

Among the best poets that followed Villegas we may mention an de Jauregui, who translated the 'Pharsalia' of Lucan; Encisco, prince of Borja and Esquilache, an ardent cultivator of poetry, who has left most voluminous works; and Bernardino, Count of Rebolledo, ambassador to Denmark, where he wrote the later part of his poems. But poetry may be said to have perished with these writers. They were beginning to confound poetry with reason, imagination with knowledge; and instead of genuine poetry, to compose treatises on history, geography, government, and war, in versified prose. The genius of Calderon, lately mentioned, seemed to be one of the last brilliant flashes of the versatile genius of the Spaniard.

## SPANISH PROSE DURING THE THIRD PERIOD.

1500—1665.

The good taste of the best Spanish authors led them to mark distinctly the boundary between poetry and prose; and this was never more rigorously insisted on than during this period. But there were serious hindrances to the advancement of dignified prose. The intercourse with Italy had made the Spaniards feel the want of elegance in their own colloquial language; and however far they carried some of their patriotic notions, many of them deemed their vernacular an unsuitable vehicle for serious compositions. Besides, there was little demand for books of this nature, the taste of the people having been vitiated by the exclusive pursuit of that light literature which had taken the Spanish language as its peculiar inheritance. In the reign of Charles V. the passion for chivalrous romances had become almost a disease, for the art of printing had facilitated the circulation of the old ones, and modern imitations were not wanting.

To imitate the ancient classics was the only means by which good literature could be cultivated with success; for the Italian authors, with few exceptions, presented that playful and often superficial kind of elegance which rendered them quite unfit to be models for those of Spain. Unfortunately, the ecclesiastical and political despotism of the age imposed heavy shackles on the mental powers of those who would have constructed a national prose style on the ancient models. Neither the didactic nor historical styles could be developed with freedom; and circumstances were, if possible, still more unfavourable for the rhetorical. Encompassed with such obstacles, the writers of Spanish prose could not be expected to produce works worthy of comparison with the classic examples they would fain have imitated; but their efforts to open the path of genuine eloquence in their national literature deserve nevertheless to be honourably recorded.

## DIDACTIC AND RHETORICAL PROSE.

Juan Lopez de Palacios Rubios, whom Marino Siculo calls the prince of jurists, was a native of a village in Castile, and studied in one of the colleges of Salamanca about the year 1484. He obtained a gown in the chancery of Valladolid, and thence was promoted to the royal counsel of the Queen Joanna and her son Charles, having previously been nominated by Ferdinand the Catholic as one of the framers and editors of the laws called '*de Toro*.' In noticing the merits of this lawyer as a writer, due prominence must be given to his '*Treatise on Martial Courage*.' In this work he treats of the essence, origin, and effects of military valour, and of the various modifications of this virtue necessary to constitute a gallant and self-possessed cavalier in the different crises of war. All this is discussed according to the principles of natural and moral philosophy, and illustrated by a reference to the historic deeds of ancient heroes. It is addressed to his eldest son, for whose instruction it seems to have been written, doubtless with a view to prepare him for entering on a military career. The diction of the work is clear, fluent, and even elegant, considering the state of the Castilian language at the period in which it was written.

Fernan Perez de Oliva of Cordova is considered the father of Spanish didactic prose. Early in the sixteenth century this learned man travelled through Italy and France, and finally settled at Salamanca, where he became professor of theology, and delivered lectures on the Aristotelian philosophy. He was afterwards appointed tutor to the young prince Philip, but died soon afterwards (1530), before completing his fortieth year. Oliva gave to the learned of his time the wholesome example of writing exclusively in the Castilian language. His great object was to prove that it could be accommodated to every subject, and that in good hands it was capable of displaying elegant composition. His most celebrated work is a '*Dialogue on the Dignity of Man*,' after the manner of Cicero. It was the first specimen in Spanish literature of clear and connected discussion maintained in correct and dignified language.

Oliva had a successful pupil in his nephew, Ambrosio de Morales, who was born at Cordova in the year 1513, and early acquired a high literary reputation. Charles V. appointed him classical tutor to his natural son Don John of Austria, and he was afterwards installed by Philip II. in the post of historiographer or chronicler of Castile. From this period he appears to have devoted himself

exclusively to history. His didactic works consist of treatises, in one of which he urgently recommends the rhetorical cultivation of the Spanish language, which the writers of his day so unjustly repudiated. His style, though neither energetic nor impressive, is natural, clear, precise, and not unfrequently adorned with pleasing images.

Fray Don Antonio de Guevara was the son of a noble family in the province of Alava, and died in 1545. After having attended the court of the Catholic kings, to which his father had introduced him at the age of twelve, he embraced a religious life in the order of the monks of St Francis, in which he filled various offices with credit, and rose through several degrees of promotion. He was chaplain and chronicler to the Emperor Charles V., who promoted him to the episcopal see of Guadix, and afterwards to that of Mondoñedo. The following extract is from his 'Timepiece for Princes.' He is recommending the Emperor Marcus Aurelius as an example to Charles V. :—

\* Concerning many princes, we read of notable deeds which ought to be kept in remembrance. But everything that M. Aurelius said and did is worthy of being understood, and proper to be imitated. While other men were simply philosophers, M. Aurelius was both a very learned philosopher and a very powerful prince; and for this cause he is worthy of more confidence than another; for as a prince he experienced the evils for which, as a philosopher, he gives remedies. Your majesty ought to take this learned philosopher and noble emperor as an instructor in your youth, as a father in your government, as a commander in your wars, as a standard in your expeditions, as a friend in your troubles, as a master in your sciences, as an aim in your desires, and as a competitor in your achievements. I wish, sire, to write to you the life of this man, who was a heathen, and not the life of another, who was a Christian; because this pagan prince had as much glory in this world for being good, as your majesty will have punishment in the other if you should be bad.

Behold, most serene prince, the life of this monarch, and see how clear he was in his judgment; how upright in his justice; how prudent in his life; how gracious to his friends; how patient in his sufferings; how forbearing with his enemies; how severe with tyrants; how pacific with the peaceful; how friendly to learned men; how courageous in war; how amiable in peace; and, above all, how elevated in his conversation, and how profound in his judgment!

It often appears to me that people think the Eternal Majesty, who gives majesty to princes, has not only made you greater than all in majesty, but has perhaps freed you more than us from human weaknesses. But I see that he certainly has not. I see that, as you are of the sons of this age, you can live only according to the manners of the age; I see that, as you live in the world, you can only



know the things of the world; I see that, living in the flesh, you cannot but be subject to its infirmities; I see that, to whatever length you may extend your life, you must at last be shut up in the tomb; I see that your trouble is immense, and that repose never enters your doors; I see that in winter you are cold, and in summer you are hot; I see that hunger fatigues you, and thirst afflicts you; I see that friends forsake you, and enemies surround you; I see that you suffer sorrow, and that you lack joy; I see that you are helpless, and that you are not well served; I see that you have many wants, and yet but small supplies.

‘Finally, I say, what more need we see when we behold a prince dying. Oh princes and grandees! in death you have to come into the power of worms, why in life do you not submit to good counsels? If you unfortunately make an error, men dare not punish you for it, and therefore you have the more need of advice and counsel; for the traveller who first gets out of the way knows not how much further he will wander. If the people thus err, they ought to be punished; if the prince, he should be admonished.’

Francisco Cervantes de Salazar followed the track which had been marked out by Perez de Oliva. He wrote a continuation of the dialogue on ‘The Dignity of Man,’ which he considered unfinished, because Oliva allows the friend of human nature and also its enemy to deliver their opinions, while the appointed arbiter draws no inference. In the person of this third character Salazar recapitulates the whole subject, and arrives at a definite conclusion.

Among the works published and elucidated by Salazar is a fable entitled ‘Idleness and Industry,’ written by one Luis Mejia, who, it appears, was a distinguished lawyer, but concerning whose history, or the mode in which the manuscripts came into his hands, Salazar gives no information. This apologue represents a Spanish cavalier called Labricio (Labour) as in treaty of marriage with a lady called Ocia (Idleness), when, on his returning to Minerva for assistance, the goddess bestowed on him one of her own ladies named Diligence, the sister of Utility, as these ought to be the inseparable companions of Labour. The style of the fable is pure, clear, dignified, and correct, and though some monotony is felt in the dialogue, there are here and there passages of great beauty and energy.

Salazar also translated from the Latin the writings of Luis Vives, one of those learned Spaniards who despised the Castilian as a vehicle for literature. Thus far he had proceeded in his literary labours before his twenty-fifth year, when the death of his patron, the archbishop of Seville, deprived him of the means of effecting various other publications which he had in contemplation; and notwithstanding the bright promise of his early life, he seems to have sunk into obscurity.

## FRANCISCO DE VILLALOBOS.

Francisco de Villalobos was a physician who flourished at the courts of Ferdinand, Charles V., and Philip II. He lived to an advanced age; and mortified at finding his science more applauded than remunerated, he wrote with a frankness and pungency which forms the principal value of his works. They abound in national witticisms, and spicy mottoes, brought out in brief and simple style. This, it appears, was more needed from good writers, in order to the improvement of the language, than smoothness and floridity, which were more general objects of ambition. Considered in this light, Villalobos is placed in the catalogue of the best prose-writers of the third age of the Castilian language. Among his works is a treatise on 'The Three Great Propensities'—loquacity, obstinacy, and derision. He is cited rather as a good writer than as a great author, for the matter of his works is of little interest or value. In the preface to one of his medical works he says, 'I have laboured to elucidate this subject by using the Castilian language in the clearest manner possible; and it is not that of Toledo, though the people there presume that their dialect is the model for Castile, on account of the great nobles and gentry who live there; but they ought to remember that in every nation the language of the court has the preference, and at Valladolid the courtiers do not say *hacien* for *hacian*, nor *comien* for *comian*, nor do they use *albacea*, nor *almutacen*, nor *ataforica*, nor other Moorish words with which the Toledans pollute the elegance, and tarnish the polish of the Castilian language. This digression I have made in order that the ladies of Toledo may not henceforth regard us as clowns.'

The most popular didactic authors, however, were not the moral and philosophic, like Guevara and Oliva; still less those who investigated subjects connected with natural history, of whom there were a few. The Ascetics and Mystics—those who chose purely religious themes—were at once the most favoured and the most successful in advancing the prose literature of their country. They formed a class of men—the natural produce of the Spanish soil—faithful almost without exception to the old Castilian genius, naturally gifted with a moving, harmonious eloquence, and stimulated by piety of great sincerity and fervour.

The venerable Juan de Avila was celebrated chiefly as an indefatigable and powerful preacher in the early part of the sixteenth century. He belonged to an honourable and wealthy family, and was sent to Salamanca to study jurisprudence when he

had scarcely completed his fourteenth year. But he soon returned to his father's house, being strongly impressed with the feeling that he had a call from Heaven to pursue a different course. Shutting himself up in a lonely apartment, he spent about three years in the austere life which was then deemed religious. A Franciscan monk happening to pass that way, was struck with his early devotedness, and persuaded his parents to send him to Alcalá that he might study divinity, and prepare for the church. At the university he distinguished himself no less by his exemplary conduct than by his superior talents; and having taken holy orders, he determined to honour the memory of his parents, who were now dead, by celebrating his first mass in his native place. On that occasion he appropriated the expense of the banquet, which it was usual to give on such occasions, to feed and clothe twelve poor persons. He also distributed among the poor all the patrimony that his parents had left him. The ecclesiastical prebends, and even the lords of the court, sought to enjoy the benefit of his exemplary life and doctrine; but he declined all their solicitations, believing it his peculiar vocation to travel from place to place preaching to the people. This it appears he did with singular spirit and fervour, and with extraordinary effect on the feelings of those who listened to him. The consequence of his long and frequent exhortations was, that his constitution broke down when he was about fifty years of age. During seventeen succeeding years of almost constant indisposition, he endeavoured to benefit the world by writing on religious subjects. The most remarkable of his effusions are a commentary on the passage, 'Hearken, O daughter, and consider,'\* which contains some fine specimens of pathetic eloquence; and his 'Spiritual Letters,' written to persons of various conditions, and of both sexes. The latter were translated into both Italian and French. They are remarkable for energy, precision, and vigour of style. Their object was to encourage the weak, to comfort the afflicted, and to rouse the lukewarm. It is remarked concerning them, that the style and diction of those addressed to religious females and ladies is far more ornamented and elegant than that which he uses to prelates, priests, and gentlemen. Notwithstanding a good deal of inaccuracy and negligence, Avila is considered as a creative genius in the mystic Castilian, which he enriched with numerous and energetic words, to which the ear had not hitherto been accustomed. We can form no judgment of the merit of Avila's eloquence but by the astonishing effects which are said to have been produced by it. The stoutest hearts trembled under his

\* Psalm xlv.

preaching, and great numbers were persuaded to lead the religious life to which he exhorted them. He died in the year 1569.

Fray Luis de Granada was the intimate friend and biographer of the venerable Avila, and a man of very similar spirit. His father was one of those whom Ferdinand induced by valuable privileges and immunities to settle in Granada after its conquest from the Moors. Here Luis was born in the year 1504. At five years of age he was left a destitute orphan by the death of both his parents; but the Count of Tendilla, alcaide of Alhambra, struck with the singular intelligence of the child, took him under his protection, and gave him an education with his own sons. Having completed his nineteenth year, Luis determined to devote himself to the church, assumed the habit of the preaching friars in the convent of Santa Cruz, and became the first evangelical orator of his day. In vain did the queen offer him the bishopric of Visen, and afterwards nominate him to the metropolitan church of Braga: he declined all ecclesiastical honours and emoluments to spend his life in what appeared to him a sphere of humble but extensive usefulness.

Luis de Granada wrote several things in Latin; but his 'Guide to Sinners,' his 'Meditations for the Seven Mornings and Evenings of the Week,' and his 'Symbol of Faith,' which are all in the vernacular, are his most celebrated works. His friend Avila had created, so to speak, a powerful and deeply-coloured language for embodying religious sentiment, and Granada beautified it; he retouched it with light and shade, and gave it harmony, fluency, and dignity. These authors appear to have been long considered the great models of religious eloquence in Spanish prose. It is impossible for us to enter into the rapture of Spanish critics in extolling the power and pathos of their effusions; and we forbear to make extracts from those on the sufferings and death of the Saviour, which are considered the most exquisite specimens; for the subject is too solemn for quotations, not be calculated to assist the English reader with corresponding feelings. But the following is a fine passage, describing the 'Descent into Hell,' to comfort the spirits in prison, who, though righteous, were not permitted to taste the joys of Paradise till the great sacrifice was completed—a favourite doctrine of the church, and one which has often been made the subject of poetry:—

On that glorious day the sun shone more brightly than on any other, surveying its Lord in dutiful splendour amid his rejoicings, as if he served him in darkness through his sufferings. The heavens, which had been veiled in mourning to hide his agonies, were now bright with redoubled glory, as they saw him rise victorious from the grave. And in such a day who would not rejoice! The whole



humanity of Christ rejoiced in it; all the disciples of Messiah rejoiced in it; heaven rejoiced, earth rejoiced; hell itself shared in the general jubilee: for the triumphant Prince descended into its depths, clothed in splendour and might. The everlasting darkness became bright before him; the eternal wailings ceased; the realms of torment paused at his approach. The princes of Edom were disturbed, and the mighty men of Moab trembled, and they that dwelt in the land of Canaan were filled with fear. And the multitude of the suffering, murmuring said, "Who is this mighty one, so resplendent, so powerful? Never before was his likeness seen in these realms of Hades; never hath the tributary world sent such a one to these depths. One who demands judgment—not a debtor; one who fills us with dread—not one guilty like ourselves; a judge, not a culprit; a conqueror, not a sinner. Say where were our watchmen and our guards when he burst in victory on our barred gates? By what might has he entered? And who is he that can do these things? Were he guilty, he were not thus bold; if the shade of sin lay on his soul, how could our darkness be made bright with his glory? If he be God, why should hell receive him? If man, whence hath he this might? If he be God, why dwelt he in the grave? If man, by what authority would he thus lay waste our abodes?"

Thus murmured the vassals of hell as the Conqueror entered in glory to free his chosen captives. For there stood they all assembled together, all the souls of the just, who, from the foundation of the world till that day, had passed through the portals of the grave; all the prophets and men of might who had glorified the Lord in the manifold agonies of martyrdom; a glorious company!—a mighty treasure!—the richest inheritance of the Redeemer's triumph! For there stood the two original parents of the generations of man—the first in sin, but the first in faith and hope: there stood that aged saint who rescued in the Ark of Safety those that re-peopled the world when the waters of the deluge had retired: there stood the father of the faithful, who first received by merit the revelation of God's will, and wore in his person the marks of his election: there stood his obedient son, who, bearing on his shoulders the wood for his own sacrifice, showed forth the redemption of the world: there stood the holy progenitor of the Twelve Tribes, who, obtaining his father's blessing in the assumed guise of another's garb, set forth the mystery of the humanity and incarnation of the Divine Word: there stood also, as it were guests newly arrived in that strange land, the holy Baptist, and the blessed Simcon, who prayed that he might not be taken from the earth until with his own eyes he had seen its salvation; who received it in his arms, and gently sang its canticle of peace: and there, too, found a place the poor Lazarus of the gospel, who, for the patience with which he bore his wounds, deserved to join so noble a company, and share its longing hopes. And for this day all this host of sanctified spirits stood there mourning and grieving; and in the midst of them all,

and as the leader of them all, the holy king and prophet repeated without ceasing his ancient lamentation :—"As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God! My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?" Oh blessed and holy king, if this be the cause of thy lamentation, let it cease for ever; for behold thy God! behold thy Saviour! Change, then, thy chant, and sing as thou wast wont to sing of old: "Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land; thou hast pardoned the offences of thy people; thou hast hidden thy face from the multitude of their sins."

Fray Luis de Granada lived to the age of eighty-four, honoured by all ranks, and died at the close of the year 1588, in a convent at Lisbon, where he had spent his declining years in strict seclusion.

The works of Fray Luis de Leon, whose life and poetry have been already noticed, have always been considered as holding a high place in the theological literature of his country. His treatise on the 'Names of Christ' was written in prison, and its eloquence often partakes of the gorgeous colouring of the elder Spanish literature; but his most popular prose work was 'The Perfect Wife,' composed for the use of a newly-married lady, in the form of a commentary on some of the Proverbs of Solomon. His exposition of the Book of Job, which was finished the year he died, but which no one ventured to publish till late in the eighteenth century, displays a more serious and settled power than any former work.

Several other names of less note belonged to this school of spiritualists. It did not escape the notice of the Inquisition, which now condemned, now applauded its labours, and at least made its members feel that a watchful eye was ever upon them. Their eloquence gave strength and dignity, if not purity and finish, to didactic prose; but it certainly confirmed that tendency to diffuse and florid declamation which was one of its earliest blemishes, and from which it has never since been completely purged.

It is proper here to remark, that the oratory of the pulpit was the only kind that was cultivated in Spain, even in the most splendid period of her literature; because in no other profession than the clerical was an orator permitted to address the public. Forensic eloquence could have no place before tribunals which, even in the ordinary administration of justice, dealt with the wheel and the fagot—not with the spirit of conviction and persuasion. Deliberative eloquence was not favoured in the political assemblies of the kingdom; from the time of Ferdinand and Isabella the Cortés were gradually restrained in their privileges,

till they were reduced to the condition of recording, instead of discussing or modelling, the laws; and political eloquence would no more have been tolerated by one of the Philips than Lutheranism itself. And when we take into consideration the religious shackles with which the Spanish mind was loaded, it is easy to imagine what pulpit oratory must generally have been in the hands of the monks, recommending a religion of forms and penances; and what a bold step was taken by such men as Avila, Granada, and Leon, when they strove to move the minds and hearts of the multitude, and employ them on lofty themes of spiritual meditation.

Their success was short. The affected style of Gongora soon found its way into the churches, the voice of fashion, especially at the court, being in its favour. Paravicino, a wit, a gentleman, a courtier, and a zealous cultorist, was the leading pulpit orator early in the seventeenth century; and, as might be expected, many were found anxious to rival his popularity. Fashionable audiences were collected and arranged by such preachers to express their approbation of the more elaborate parts of the discourse, and religious dignity disappeared from the Spanish pulpit.



#### HISTORICAL PROSE.

The historical institution established by Alphonso X. was still maintained, and national chroniclers were appointed and paid as formerly; but after the accession of Charles V. they could not venture to write with any degree of freedom, even in favour of the court party. His historiographer, Ocampo, was a man of sufficient shrewdness to perceive the wisdom of evading the duty assigned to the old Spanish chroniclers of recording the events of their own age. He was happy enough to discover that there was no ancient history of Spain in existence, and he prudently fulfilled his office of royal historiographer by compiling a history of the Peninsula from the Deluge till the second Punic War. This work, entitled 'A General Chronicle of Spain, in Five Books,' presents little that is interesting or attractive, though it affords a singular display of erudition.

Those truths which might not be publicly told during the reign of Charles V., were under no less restraint in that of Philip II. But even he nominated a historian for the provinces of Castile,

and another for those of Arragon. Ambrosio de Morales continued the work of Ocampo, bringing the history down to the establishment of Christianity. He emulated his predecessor in learning and research, and at the same time paid more attention to the style of his writing, in which he rose considerably above the usual language of chroniclers. When he comes to the Christian era, he introduces the lives of several Spanish saints, and certainly no previous writer had imparted so much elegance and historical dignity to this kind of biography.

Geronimo Zurita was the historiographer appointed by Philip II. for the Arragonian provinces. As a politician, he held clear and well-founded views of the practical application of history, and under more favourable circumstances might have become the Machiavelli, if not the Livy of Spain. He undertook the onerous task of exploring the ancient chronicles and records, in order to compile a history of Arragon from the Moorish invasion till the reign of Charles V. But when he came to exhibit the rise and formation of the national constitution, he felt the difficulty of developing the republican principles on which that constitution was founded, and the ancient privileges which Charles V. had solemnly ratified, as these topics were likely to be far from pleasing to a despotic sovereign. Here, therefore, instead of drawing from his researches a bold and independent conclusion in favour of civil liberty, he warily observes that 'subjects ought to be content if peace and tranquillity prevail in the country in which they live;' and doubtless Philip II., with the aid of the Duke of Alva and the Inquisition, had secured to his subjects peace and tranquillity enough of a certain kind. Zurita entitled his work 'The Annals of Arragon.' Several parts of it are interesting and instructive; but the author has not with sufficient care distinguished important from unimportant events, or avoided the formal style of the ancient chroniclers, with their constantly-recurring '*and*;' so that, on the whole, he has not succeeded in composing a pleasing historical picture, or in framing a record that one would be anxious to peruse throughout.

ARGENSOLAS.—The work of Zurita was continued by the Brothers Lupercio and Bartolomé Leonardo Argensola,\* in the reign of Philip III. In rhetorical merit their supplement is greatly superior to the original work. The rebellion in Castile and other unpleasant matters connected with the accession of Charles V., to which no Spanish writer had yet ventured to allude, were now related with freedom and fidelity. On the accession of the youthful Philip IV., Bartolomé Argensola dedicated his

\* See page 247.



work to the Duke of Olivarez, who held the reins of government, and was endeavouring to recruit the exhausted strength of Castile by encroachments on the Arragonian constitution. It appears that the duke accepted the dedication, little anticipating that the recollection of their ancient immunities would rouse the people of Arragon to take up arms in defence of the constitution, which these annals so fondly and so faithfully describe.

MENDOZA.—But none of these courtly historiographers can by any means be compared with Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, whose talents as a poet we have already noticed.\* In his old age, and after his retirement from public life, he wrote the history of the war of Granada. Taking Sallust, and occasionally Tacitus for his models, he is acknowledged to have nearly approached the merits of those great masters; and next to the works of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, the history of the war of Granada is considered the earliest in modern literature that deserves comparison with the classic histories of antiquity. The narrative is simple and interesting in the highest degree, and the style exceedingly elegant, though occasionally somewhat overstudied. The statesman appears in almost every page, and it is easy to see that Mendoza fully appreciated the error committed by Philip in driving the Moors to rebellion. He does not indeed pronounce his opinion so as to expose himself to the fury of civil or religious vengeance, but it is sufficiently indicated by the poignant manner in which the facts were related. So sensibly was this felt by the Spanish government, that the work was not allowed to appear in print till 1610, thirty-five years after the death of its author, and then not without considerable alteration. A full and correct edition did not appear till the year 1776.

The subject of this history is the revolt of the Moors of Granada, which broke out in the year 1568, in consequence of the fanatical cruelty of Philip II. After informing the reader that in the preceding reign they had been forbidden the public exercise of their religion, and required, under pain of death, to profess Christianity, 'The Inquisition,' says Mendoza, 'now began to torment them more than formerly.' The king commanded them to abandon the Moorish tongue, even for the purposes of commerce and communication amongst themselves. He deprived them of their African slaves, whom they had treated with tenderness, even as if they had been their own children. He obliged them to lay aside their Arabian costume, on which they had spent considerable sums, and to incur new expense in adopting the Castilian. He compelled the women to go unveiled, and to open

\* See page 180.

their windows, which they had been accustomed to keep closed. It was announced to them also, that the king desired their children to be taken from them, that they might be educated in the convents of Castile. They were forbidden the use of their baths, which were both necessary and delightful to them; their music also, their songs, their festivals, all their usual amusements, all their gay assemblies were interdicted. These new orders were promulgated without any addition to the guards, without despatching any fresh troops, and without any reinforcement of the old garrisons or establishment of new ones. The consequence was, that the Moors prepared for revolt. They collected arms and ammunition in the mountains of the Alpuxara, and chose as their leader a descendant of their ancient kings, who assumed the name of Aben-Humeya. For eight months they defended themselves in the mountains against a numerous army, commanded by Don John of Austria. The ferocity displayed by the Spaniards during this war was of the most frightful character: not only were numberless prisoners consigned to death without mercy, but the inhabitants of whole villages in the plains were put to the sword on suspicion of holding intercourse with the rebels. An indemnity was promised to whoever would betray or destroy the chiefs of the insurrection, and both Aben-Humeya and his successor Aben-Boo were assassinated by their own countrymen on this inducement. The rest of the inhabitants of the Alpuxara were sold into slavery, and the Moors of the plains were dragged from their homes, and driven in troops into the interior of Castile, where they perished miserably: thousands passed over into Africa, or found refuge in the neighbouring countries of Europe. In order that he might act with perfect orthodoxy in this affair, Philip consulted a theologian with respect to the conduct he ought to pursue towards these enemies of the faith: the reply was, that 'the more enemies he destroyed, the fewer would remain.'

There is but one example of a speech being put into the mouth of one of the principal characters. Mendoza makes one of the insurgent Moors say that which he dare not express as his own opinion. The following is part of it:—

'They have excluded us, too, from society and human intercourse, for they forbid us to speak our own language, and we do not understand theirs. How, then, are we to ask or give what our life requires, cut off from the converse of men, and denied what is allowed even to the brutes? And yet who denies that the man of the Castilian tongue may hold the law of the prophet, and that he of the Moorish language may keep the law of Jesus? They summon our sons to their congregations and colleges; they teach them the arts which

our ancestors prohibited, lest the purity of youth should be sullied, and the truth of the law made the subject of contention. Every hour they threaten to tear them from the arms of their mothers, and from the protection of their fathers, and to transport them to strange lands, where they may forget our manner of life, and learn to be the enemies of the fathers who begot them, and the mothers who nursed them during the helpless years of infancy. They command us to lay aside our own costume, and to dress ourselves in the habit of the Castilians. Yet the Germans may be seen among them in one style of dress; the French in another; the Greeks in another; young men in one way, and in another the old men; every nation, every profession, and every condition uses its own manner of dressing, and all are Christians; but we Moors are forbidden to dress after the Moorish mode, as if we carried the law in our garments and not in our hearts.<sup>2</sup>

After the introduction of Gongorism, history was the only kind of composition that maintained anything like its former dignity and precision; and there now appeared little hope of bringing any other species of prose-writing to perfection.

Juan de Mariana was a foundling, born at Talavera in 1536, and adopted by the Jesuits, who were not slow to perceive his extraordinary talent. At the age of twenty-four he was sent by them into Italy, and afterwards into France, as a public instructor in their colleges. Though a faithful Jesuit, he was not a very servile one: and being appointed by the Inquisition to decide on the merits of Montano's polyglot Bible, published at Antwerp in 1570, he displeased his superiors by pronouncing in its favour, as he did afterwards by the mode in which he arranged the Index Expurgatorius of 1584. An occasion was found against him when, in 1609, he published at Cologne a treatise on 'Mortality and Immortality,' and another on 'The Coinage of the Realm;' and though now seventy-three years of age, he was subjected to confinement and penance, while these works were collected, destroyed, and their names entered on the Index. But his spirit was not broken by persecution, and he lived to be nearly ninety years of age.

The great work of the last thirty or forty years of Mariana's life was the history of Spain from the earliest times till the death of Ferdinand the Catholic, though it appears he held no official position as a historiographer. In this work he was careful to avoid any collision with the Holy Office, and distinctly professed only to select the most interesting events of his country's history from annals already authorised, and to place them in an attractive point of view for the information of foreigners. Accordingly, he embodied whatever miracles and prodigies he found to have received papal sanction, and meritoriously abstained from any critical analysing



of his materials or irreverent sifting of authorities. The result is, that his work has been pronounced by competent judges to be, 'if not the most trustworthy of annals, yet the most remarkable union of picturesque chronicling with sober history that the world has ever seen.'

In order to secure a prose style after the ancient classical models, Mariana wrote his history first in Latin, and then translated it into Spanish, dedicating both works to Philip II. Though, in imitation of the ancients, he put speeches into the mouths of his principal personages on occasions of great importance, and these strike us as being very unlike what the individuals themselves would have uttered, yet, on the whole, the historical style of Mariana is considered a model. He has generally avoided intricate and protracted sentences; his diction is correct and his style idiomatic, with all the old Castilian dignity, and somewhat too of its sturdiness. He devoted little attention, however, to the philosophy of history, which might have led him to express dangerous opinions. Careful as he was to confine himself to the relation of facts, and to avoid any criticism that might offend the reigning powers, he fell under the suspicion of favouring rebellious principles, and hardly escaped being again severely handled by the Inquisition. The subjoined extract is part of the description of the great battle between Don Roderic and the Moors in 711, which was followed by the overthrow of the Gothic monarchy in Spain:—

'Roderic, moved by the present danger, and inflamed with the desire of being avenged for the past, summoned the whole kingdom to arms. He commanded that all those who were of age should repair to their standards, and threatened heavy punishments to those who should disobey. A great number of people assembled at this mandate; those who make the lowest estimate say there were more than 100,000. But being long unused to war, they came with the appearance of joy and courage; they boasted, and yet turned renegade; they were cowards even to a marvel; and even without fortitude to bear the toils and inconveniences of the campaign. The greater part had no arms, but slings or sticks; and this was the army with which the king marched into Andalusia! They arrived at Xeres, where the enemy was drawn up. They pitched their camp, and threw up their fortifications in a plain through which the Guadalete flows. Both armies were anxious to engage: the Moors, flushed with victory; the Goths, eager to risk their lives for vengeance, for their country, their children, their wives, and their liberty. Yet many of them felt in their hearts that strange sadness and silence which falls at times as a presage of impending misfortune.'

Antonio de Solís was born in 1610, a few years before the



death of Mariana. He was the intimate friend of Calderon, and in early life he furnished to the stage several comedies in his style. But, like many other Spanish poets, he afterwards looked on this employment of his talents as sinful, and devoted the latter part of his life to the church. He enjoyed a place in the government of Philip IV., and soon after taking the religious habit, he in the following reign obtained the lucrative post of historiographer of the transactions of Spain in the Indies. In this capacity he wrote his celebrated history of Mexico, which is considered one of the last and best specimens of classical historic composition in the Spanish language. It contains an account of the conquest of Mexico, in a genuine historical form, though the subject was full enough of brilliant adventures to seduce a poetic author into the style of romantic narrative. He lays it down as his fundamental principle, that accuracy of narration is genuine historical elegance, and that in this species of composition whatever is truly told is well told. Nevertheless, his own talent for description raised him far above the dryness and dulness of a mere chronicler; and his previous labours for the stage had accustomed him to arrange and combine events in such a manner as to place them in the most interesting point of view. As for anything like profound thought, or critical acumen, in pointing out the political bearings of those events, they were but little needed for the kind of history he had undertaken.

The adventures of Fernando Cortez, with the handful of warriors who overthrew a wealthy and powerful empire; their invincible courage, the dangers over which they triumphed, and the savage cruelty with which they pursued their victory; and, on the other hand, the peaceful virtues of the Mexicans; their arts and government; descriptions of persons, places, and manners hitherto unknown to Europeans; all these formed an assemblage of novel and attractive points, and afforded an unusually fine topic for historic narrative. Antonio de Solis proved himself fully equal to do it justice, and few historical works have commanded greater interest from the intelligent reader. It is to be remarked, however, that this work is fully imbued with the feelings which led its author to shut himself out from worldly interests and sympathies. He views the contest from the steps of the altar where he has been consecrated, and considers it entirely as a conflict between the powers of light and the legions of darkness. The unhappy Indians command no sympathy in their heroic but fruitless struggle to maintain all that made life itself dear to them; and the Spaniards, who invaded them under colour of rooting out their religious abominations, are heroes of the highest order.

The publication of the work, which took place in 1684, seems to have left the author as poor as it found him. In a letter to a friend he says, 'I have many creditors who would stop me in the street if they saw I had new shoes on;' in another, he asks for a garment to protect him from the winter's cold. When he died, at the age of seventy-six, 'he left his soul the only heir of his body'—that is, the wreck of his property to purchase expiatory masses.

Portrait of Fernando Cortez, from the 'Conquest of New Spain.'

'He devoted himself to literature in his youth, and spent two years at Salamanca, sufficient to let him know that study did not agree with the liveliness of his disposition, and that a literary life was contrary to his nature. He returned home resolved to follow war, and his parents sent him to that of Italy, which was then the most honourable, and that in which the military art was most likely to be well learned. But when the time for embarking arrived, he was seized with an illness which proved tedious, and thus it happened that he was obliged to change his destination, but not his profession. He determined to cross over to the Indies, of which the conquest was then going on. When he arrived at St Domingo and made himself known, he met with a hearty welcome, and so favourable a reception from the governor, that he placed him among his own men, and took his property under his particular protection. But these favours were not sufficient to divert him from his favourite pursuit: he was so discontented with the idleness of that island, that he begged leave to go and serve in that of Cuba, where all were in arms. In the events of that war he distinguished himself by his valour and his obedience, which are the first rudiments of military science. He soon obtained the reputation of being a brave man; and afterwards he manifested his wisdom by raising difficulties, and resolving them among the officers, by which he advanced himself in the opinion of the soldiers.

'He was a young man of pleasing person and manners, and he maintained his sway over others chiefly by his amiable disposition. He always spoke well of the absent; he was lively and discreet in conversation; and generously divided with his companions whatever he had; so that he could always gain friends without seeking any recompense.'

Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico.

From the Same.

'Corresponding to the sumptuousness and pride of his public edifices, there was the pomp of his house and the ornaments with which he decorated his person, in order to keep up the reverence and awe of his vassals. To this end also he invented new cere-

monies and superfluities, considering as a defect the humbleness with which the former Mexican kings had comported themselves. The number of his women was enormous and scandalous, for there lived within his palace above three thousand, between mistresses and servants; and as many as were born with any beauty throughout his dominions were brought to him for inspection, for his ministers and officers gave them up in the way of tribute and vassalage, considering the lewdness of the king as important to the kingdom. He gave away these women in marriage, finding them husbands among men of the highest nobility; for they were not only enriched, but in their eyes beautified, by having passed through his hands; in so slight estimation were virtue and honour held among a people whose religion not only permitted, but commanded, things abhorrent to nature.

His audiences were neither easy nor frequent; they lasted a long time, and were attended with great pomp and solemnity. He listened with attention, and answered with gravity, apparently suiting his voice and countenance to his words. There were generally at his meals two or three jugglers, from among those who most excelled in the number of their performances; and they entertained him by placing, as they are wont, their happiness in the laughter of others, and clothing their rudeness under the mask of elegance.

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MELO.

The last historian of merit in this period was Don Francisco de Melo, a native of Lisbon, born in 1612. At an early age he studied with distinguished success at the university of Coimbra, and before his seventeenth year had published a poem on the restoration of Bahia, a romance under the title of 'Stratagems,' and a small work on Mathematics. But having the misfortune to lose his father, he was obliged to abandon the pursuits of literature for the more remunerative profession of arms. He entered the army, and attained the rank of colonel before he had reached his thirtieth year. Meanwhile his literary talents were so highly appreciated, that when the general who conducted the Catalonian war received directions from Philip IV. to have a history of the campaign written by whichever of the officers was most competent for the task, there was no hesitation in assigning it to Melo.

But, like many other eminent men, he had his share of adversity. At the revolt in Portugal he was suspected of being connected with the conspirators, and was thrown into prison. His innocence, however, was soon made manifest; he was set at liberty, and



completely indemnified for the losses he had sustained, both from his imprisonment and from the consequences of the violent separation of his country from the kingdom of Spain. When the independence of Portugal was afterwards recognised by Spain, he left Madrid to devote himself to the service of his native country. New troubles afterwards assailed him at the time when all seemed to promise peace, and the repose which ought to have been the reward of his labours. He was falsely accused of being accessory to the murder of a personage named Cardoso, and was imprisoned in the old tower at Lisbon, where he remained for twelve years. At length, condemned to perpetual banishment, he was obliged to withdraw to Brazil, where he remained six years, and whence he was permitted to return to his country only through the intervention of the French government.

It was during his imprisonment at Lisbon that he finished his *History of the Catalonian War*; a work which is said to rival *Hæcades* and *Livy* in elegance of style, depth of thought, and accuracy of narration. He wrote a number of other works, historical, poetical, military, moral, and political. His biographer reckons a hundred printed volumes, besides as many more which have never been edited.

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#### EPISTOLARY PROSE.

The printed specimens of epistolary prose which have been preserved from this period are comparatively few. In writing, as in conversation, it had become customary to encumber the flow of thought and feeling by the constant recurrence of ceremonial forms of address; and 'your lordship,' 'your grace,' or 'your reverence,' is found in almost every other line of those which are now extant; the use of the pronoun 'you' being admissible only in addressing persons of decidedly inferior condition. We have before us several letters, chiefly of a religious nature, by the venerable Avila and Santa Teresa; ten on various subjects by Antonio Perez; and several by Nicolas Antonio, and Antonio Solís; but none of them present any remarkable interest. In striking contrast with the formality of these epistles, is the familiar style of one from Philip II. to his natural brother Don Juan of Austria. It appears to be a kind of private postscript to the document which appointed Don Juan high admiral of the Spanish navy; and it shows some redeeming traits in the man whose public administration has led



us to consider him as a personification of ferocious bigotry. The king, with old Spanish cordiality, addresses Don Juan as 'brother,' without any other title, and uses the second personal pronoun 'you' throughout the letter, according to the old fashion. In reminding the admiral of his duties, he recommends integrity of principle as next in importance to religion.

... 'Truth, and the fulfilment of what is promised, is the foundation of credit and esteem among men, and that upon which mutual confidence rests and is supported. This is requisite in all, but much more needful in those who hold public and important offices, because on their truth and fidelity depend the public security and good faith. I charge you that you receive this important injunction, and let it be understood and known everywhere and on all occasions, that confidence may and ought to be put in whatever you say, in order that whatever relates to public affairs under your control may redound greatly to your personal honour.'

There are also some learned and critical letters in the middle of the sixteenth century, by the Bachelor Rua, professor of humanity in the city of Soria, to the bishop of Mondoñedo, in which the latter is charged with having committed grievous errors, and even gross impostures, in his historical narrations. The style of these letters is accurate and elegant, and so conformed to the rules of good speaking, that they are considered the most truly rhetorical compositions which remain from that period.



#### ROMANTIC AND SATIRICAL PROSE.

Don Diego de Mendoza, already mentioned as an eminent poet and historian, was the father of comic romance in Spain. His 'Life of Lazarillo de Tormes,' which was written while he was still a student at Salamanca, was, if not the very first of its kind, at least the first that obtained any literary consideration. It was soon translated into Italian and French, and read throughout every country in Europe. The wit of every nation has some peculiarity, and the genuine Spanish vein is to be found in the 'Lazarillo de Tórmes.\*' It appears, from the whole history of the comic literature of this country, that adroit feats of cunning and deception were eminently the favourite topics of mirth, the humour consisting in

\* *Lázaro* means a beggar, and *Lazarillo* a little beggar.

the contrast between vulgar vice and the dignity of the national manners. Mendoza's fancy, therefore, took a perfectly national direction in his choice of a subject. It is the autobiography of a beggar lad (Lazarillo), who rises in the world by his dexterity in cheating. Here the Spanish reader was invited to descend from the ideal world of chivalric romance to the sphere of common life, and even to an acquaintance with its most ignoble vices. But the object of the work appears to be not so much to display the manners of the vulgar, as to satirise the follies and vices of the higher classes, which Lazarillo has the best opportunity of observing, as he sees them in undress and behind the scenes. It was about the year 1520, early in the reign of Charles V., and before the wars of that monarch or the mania of transatlantic emigration had materially affected the ancient manners of the country. We have here depicted to the life the magnificent parsimony, the stately dignity in the midst of extreme poverty, the pride that would rather want than work, which distinguished Castile from Arragon and Catalonia, and which left it in time without either commerce or agriculture. Lazarillo, born in the bed of a mountain-stream, nursed by the mistress of a negro, and employed as the guide of a blind beggar, has at length the honour of becoming a gentleman's servant. But in this situation he can never obtain enough even of dry bread to satisfy the cravings of hunger; he breaks off the corners of the loaves, and uses various artifices to make it appear that it has been the work of rats. It has been considered matter of surprise that Mendoza, a young man at college, should have become so thoroughly acquainted with vulgar life, and should have been able to paint beggars and rogues with the liveliness and satirical power which our modern novelists have acquired only by long personal familiarity with the characters and scenes they describe.

Lazarillo passes into the service of a Don\* who spends part of the day at church, and the rest in lounging, arranging his mustaches, and playing with his sword. But dinner-time never arrives in this establishment, and Lazarillo steals bread in the streets for the support of his master as well as himself. He thus describes his entrance into this service:—

‘Trudging on from door to door with very little success, for Charity had taken her flight to heaven, Providence threw me in the way of a Don who was passing through the street tolerably dressed,

\* All Spaniards purely descended from the patriots who retired to the mountains under Pelayo (A. D. 711), are called *hidalgo*, or nobles; and these alone are entitled to the appellation Don. *Hidalgo* is a contraction of *hijo de algo*, a ‘son of somebody.’

well combed, and with his step and voice in time and tune. He looked at me and I at him, and he said, "Young man, are you seeking a master?" I said, "Yes sir." "Then follow me," he replied; "God has been good to you in throwing you in my way, you should thank Heaven for so lucky a chance." I followed him, thankful as I was enjoined to be, and the more so as he appeared to be just the man I needed. It was in the morning when I thus met my third master, and I followed him through a great part of the city. We passed by the shops where bread and other provisions are sold. I expected, and indeed wished, that he would burden me with some of these commodities, for this was the hour at which it was usual to make markets. With reluctant step, however, we passed by these tempting things. "Perhaps," said I, "he does not like what he sees here, and we will purchase at another place." In this manner we proceeded until it struck eleven, when he entered the great church, and I followed him. He seemed to listen most devotionally to the mass and the sacred offices, until all was ended, and the congregation dispersed. Then he left the church, and began to pass along a low street at a rapid pace. I quickened my step, seeing that I had not yet broken my fast. I naturally considered that my new master must be a man well provided, and that now we were on the point of regaling ourselves: certainly we were not out of the need of it. Now the clock struck one, and we arrived at a house before which my master halted; and throwing the skirt of his mantle over his left side, he drew a key from the sleeve, and opened the gate. We entered the house; the passage was dark and gloomy, but within there was a small court and tolerable apartments. After we got in he put off his cloak, and asking if I had clean hands, he shook and folded it with me. Then blowing a bench clear of dust, he laid it on it, and sat down. He asked me in a loud voice whence I was, and how I had come to the city; and it appeared to me a more convenient hour for ordering me to lay the table and pour out the soup, than for asking me such questions. Nevertheless I satisfied him, making the best lies I could, telling him whatever was good, and dissembling the rest of my history. It was now almost two o'clock, and no more sign of eating than at a death. I remembered that he had locked the gate, nor did I hear, above or below, the steps of a living person. Nothing was to be seen but walls; not a seat, or block, or bench, or table, or even such a chest as used to be in the olden time. In a word, it seemed like a habitation only of ghosts.

'At length he said to me, "Young man, hast thou eaten?" "No, sir," said I, "for it was not yet eight o'clock when I met you." "At that hour I had breakfasted," said he; "and I may tell you that sometimes I remain thus till night, therefore put over as you best can till supper." You may easily suppose that when I heard this I was almost falling to the ground, not so much from hunger, as from despondency at perceiving that fortune was continually adverse to me. \* \* \*

Morning came; we rose, and he began to wash, and to shake and

brush his trousers, and hose, and doublet, vest, and cloak; and I dressed him, and attired myself slowly and quietly, very much to his satisfaction. He dressed himself, and as he was fastening on his sword, he said to me, "Oh if you, young man, could but know what a black this is!" There is not a mark of gold in the world for which I would give it. It is not like those which Antonio makes; he does not hit on the quickness of edge that I have here;" and he drew it from the scabbard, and touched it with his fingers. "With this I could cut the smallest tuft of wool or hair." "And I," said I to myself, "could with my teeth, though they are not of steel, serve a four-penned knave in the same manner."

"He then put it into the sheath, and girded it around him with a sword-belt ornamented with a string of large beads. And now with strutting step and frame erect, making with it and with his hand a foppish wriggling motion, throwing the skirt of his cloak sometimes over his shoulder, and sometimes under his arm, and placing his right hand skilfully, he walked forth by the door, saying, "Lázaro, look to the house, as I am going to mass; and make the bed, and go to the river for some water, locking the gate as you go out that nothing may be stolen; and leave the key here at the hinge, so that should I return in the meantime I may enter." And he passed through the principal street with so stylish an air, that he who did not know him might suppose him to be a near relative of the Count of Arcos, or at least his valet. "Success to you, sir!" said I, as I stood looking after him. "Who will meet that master of mine, and not conclude from the happy countenance he carries that he has supped well, and slept on a good bed! Who will dream that he has not breakfasted this morning! These are the great secrets, sir, which you keep to yourself, and the people know them not. Who is it that that cheerful aspect and respectable cloak and pantaloons would not deceive! And who will think that that gentleman had nothing to eat all day yesterday, but the beggar's crust of bread which his servant Lázaro carried a day and a night in his breast-pocket, where others of God's creatures might have been feeding on it! And that to-day he has washed his hands and face, in the absence of a proper hand-basin and towel, with the leg of his trousers!"

Again our hero engages himself as gentleman usher to seven ladies at once: the wives of the baker, the shoemaker, the tailor, the mason, and three others. Not one of these can afford to keep such an attendant, yet being ashamed to walk abroad without one, they have clubbed their means to maintain Lázaro among them, and enjoy his attendance in rotation. Other scenes no less amusing follow, all exhibiting the empty pride of the higher classes and the dexterous knavery of the lower.

The skill with which Mendoza sketches the avarice and selfishness of the various characters into whose service Lázaro enters, is no less remarkable than the boldness with which he includes



priests among them, exposing their peculiar vices, and assigning them their full share of merited satire. The Inquisition itself is not spared, and it seems that this court was not yet so completely *au-fait* at its work as to prevent the circulation of the book, though the spirited sketches of the friar and the seller of dispensations were placed under its ban, and cut out of the editions printed by its license. Having once been tolerated, it could not afterwards be repressed; but the holy tribunal took care that it should be the last to which such liberty was allowed, and in no subsequent work is it breathed that either the priests were immoral or the Inquisition cruel.

The contrast of the light, good-humoured audacity of Lazarillo—a perfectly original character—with the solemn and inflexible dignity of the Castilian, procured the highest popularity for this work from its first appearance. The earliest known edition was in 1553; it was often reprinted, both at home and abroad, and has always been a favourite. It became the type of a class of fictions essentially national, and which is known under the name of the *gusto picaresco* (thief-style), or, as we should express it, romances of low life.

Numberless books were afterwards written in continuation or imitation of Lazarillo. Among them the most distinguished place is assigned to 'Don Guzman de Alfarache,' which was published in 1599, several years before the appearance of Don Quixote. Its author, Mateo Aleman, had withdrawn from the court of Philip III., and was living in retirement; but it is not known what induced him to undertake this sketch of a rogue, which is said to be the most ample portraiture of the class that the language affords. It was translated into French, Italian, German, Portuguese, English, Dutch, and even Latin, and was thus circulated and read with avidity all over Europe. After these works, this form of fiction became generally welcome in Spain, and it made its way into the ductile drama, as well as into many of the shorter tales of the Peninsula.

Meantime appeared the 'Escudero Marcos de Obregon,' one of the best of the novels of this age, by the poet and musician Vicente Espinel. It is intended as a warning to young men without fortune, who attached themselves to persons of distinction, in the hope of thus getting honourably forward in the world. The story, though entertaining enough, is greatly broken by tedious moral reflections; and it falls far below both 'Guzman' and 'Lazarillo' in beauty and spirit. The same may be said of ten novels by Doña Mariana de Carvajal y Saavedra, a Spanish lady of considerable talent. They have been frequently reprinted, and seem to have enjoyed much popularity. But unfortunately even

the best of these tales present no trace of advancing taste and literary cultivation.

Quevedo's novel, 'El Gran Tacaño,' or 'Captain of Thieves,' is one of the most comical of the knavery romances; but the English reader tires of being detained so closely in scenes of squalid poverty and vulgar roguery. 'The Letters of the Cavallero de Tenaza,' or 'Knight of the Pincer,' are whimsical satires on avarice, addressed to a lady. But the European reputation of Quevedo rests on his 'Visions,' than which nothing can be more novel or striking. They consist of various revelations of the future world, in which he sees the end of vanity and the punishment of crime. Here his pleasantries are more varied, and therefore more agreeable; but, like his other satires, they have the fault of dwelling too exclusively on subjects of vulgar interest—the knavery of alguazils, notaries, physicians, and above all, tailors. It is difficult to conceive what the knights of the gentle craft could have done to exasperate our author to such a degree: a tailor with him is the *ne plus ultra* of a thief; so that as Lord Byron calls a pirate a 'marine-solicitor,' Quevedo styles a robber a 'tailor of the highways.' Several of these visions were written when Quevedo was comparatively young, and they display the warmth and sprightliness of youthful feeling. The commencement of the first vision is startling. The blast of the last trump is described, and—

'The sound drew obedience from marble, and forced hearing on the dead. All the earth began to move, permitting the bones to seek one another. Presently I beheld those who had been soldiers start fiercely from their graves, thinking they heard the signal for battle; the miser awoke in anxious fear of pillage; the epicure fancied it was a call to dinner; and the sportsman mistook it for a summons to the chase. Afterwards I saw many souls flying from their former bodies, some in disgust, others in terror; one body required an arm, and another an eye; and while I could not help smiling at their adventures in search of the lost members, I was led to admire the wisdom of Providence, that amidst such confusion no mistake was made, and no one put on his neighbour's limbs, all shuffled as they were together. In one churchyard only there was some disorder and exchanging of heads; and I saw an attorney, whose soul not being in a satisfactory state, he pretended that it had been changed, and was not his own. But what astonished me most was to see two or three tradesmen who had put on their souls awry, so that they had crowded all their five senses into the ends of their fingers!'

The opening of the 'Alguazil Possessed' is also spirited. A spectator calling him a man possessed with the devil, the evil spirit within cries out that 'He is not an ordinary man, but an *alguazil*; and you must know that it is contrary to their will for

devils to be associated with these officers, and that I ought rather to be called a devil possessed with an alguazil, than an alguazil possessed with a devil.'

Such is the style of Quevedo's wit—terse, pointed, bitter, and unsparing. It has been well remarked that he has not that discrimination which leads Cervantes, as if by instinct, to the exact measure of satirical retribution; but even in the passages most faulty from coarseness and exaggeration we often find touches of solemn and tender beauty, that prove he had higher powers and better qualities than his extraordinary wit.

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#### GONGORISM IN SPANISH PROSE.

The elegant simplicity of the style adopted by Antonio de Solís forms a strange rhetorical contrast with the Gongorism which crept into Spanish prose in the former part of the seventeenth century. No one now ventured to write without calling in all the riches of mythology to adorn his diction, and quoting all the writers of antiquity to substantiate the most obvious and commonplace sentiment. The person who is considered to have settled the character of this style, and to have given it an air of philosophical pretension, was Baltazar Gracian, a Jesuit of Arragon. He appeared as an author under the name of his brother Lorenzo, and is supposed to have died in the year 1658; but few particulars of his life have been preserved. His works are extensive and various, treating of morals, theology, politics, criticism, and rhetoric. The most diffuse bears the title of 'El Criticon,' and is an allegorical picture of the course of human life divided into epochs which he calls crises. In every page of this work we recognise a man of superior talent, who, in endeavouring to soar above everything common, gets beyond the bounds of nature and common sense—a man who would have been an excellent writer had he not laboured to be an extraordinary one.

We cannot better conclude this period of Spanish literature than in the words of one of their own historians:—'The reign of Philip IV. (1621–1665) is one of the most important to be studied in our history, for in it there happened almost insensibly one of the greatest revolutions that monarchy has ever suffered. The personal character of the king promised much. He was acute, generous, magnanimous, and a lover of his country; but he was remarkably fond of amusements and voluptuous pleasures. This defect produced a general indolence with regard to all public

...the hands of his minister Olives.  
...the evils which resulted from this  
...at least did not compromise his life and  
...the government from the date, con-  
...member. He resigned without consulting  
...quitting the reign of the Duke of Olives  
...in the ministry, who found their post let  
...the commission which he had brought on to  
...order to suppress them. It sufficed to murder  
...left to his son a crown surrounded by all the glory  
...and at the instance of Philip II.; Spain was the  
...the nations: her policy was dominant throughout  
...was warily sustained by her military commander.  
...last of Philip IV. the Spanish power was unknown  
...it was almost extinct in Italy, and the tempo with  
...respect in France, and far in the background of the  
...vanquished by the Portuguese, a people inferior both  
...and numbers. Our ancient institutions were corrupted  
...about our generals, who used to be trained in the battle  
...are now to be found chiefly in the antiquaries of  
...and at a time when war was beginning to have way  
...study in France, Germany, and England, the Spaniards  
...themselves to forget even the traditions of our military  
...and strategems from which foreigners had first learned the  
...secrets of the art of war. Literature and the sciences suffered  
...similar and no less lamentable revolution. To the immortal  
...productions of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seven-  
...teenth centuries succeeded equivocalness, quibbles, ministry of  
...words, and affectations—vicious literature in harmony with the  
...vicious policy of the time. In vain the genius and learning of  
...Quevedo gave birth to great and elevated thoughts; the corrup-  
...tion of the age infected even him, and he was one of the propagators  
...of bad taste: in vain did Cambray bring to perfection the species  
...of drama created by Lope de Vega: in vain Moreto handled  
...quips: pencil as vigorous as that of Flaminio: affectation and  
...bombast deformed their most beautiful productions; and those  
...who had found happy imitators in France and England, left in  
...their own country heirs only of their defects. Thus the torch of  
...knowledge was extinguished in Spain simultaneously with the  
...splendour of the national glory. — *Mariaux*.



## FOURTH PERIOD.

FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TILL THE PRESENT  
TIME.

At length the Spanish literati began to perceive the emptiness of the distinction which was attached to the affectation they had so fondly cultivated; but there seemed no hope of a revival of the ancient vigour, and they abandoned themselves to apathy and indolence. The intellectual as well as the political resources of the nation seemed exhausted; the temporary impulse of vanity which had stimulated its literature had subsided; the people attempted to drown the sense of their civil degradation in sensual pleasures; and the nation may be said to have fallen asleep during the reign of Charles II. This prince ascended the throne in the year 1665, and at his death, in 1700, transferred it to the House of Bourbon. His reign was the period of Spain's greatest insignificance in the political world, its deepest debasement in morals, and its lowest condition in literature. As Marina expresses it—'The mortal disease had already reached the vitals of the nation; the reign of Charles II. was a long agony in which all its symptoms were developed, and the crisis was the civil war of the succession.'

This conflict between the pretensions of the Bourbon and Hapsburg dynasties, though it devastated the fairest provinces of Spain, yet became the occasion of restoring to the inhabitants some portion of their wonted energy. It was not authority, but national pride or affection, that induced them to take up arms, and having once again begun to think and act for themselves, a measure of reviving took place. But the return to literature was slow and languid; the ardent enthusiasm never burned, and the brilliant fancy never sparkled again.

It does not appear that Philip V., though a monarch of the dynasty of France, did much to influence the Spanish taste in favour of French literature. His own talents were slender; he possessed but little taste or information; and his grave, silent, sombre character was rather Castilian than French. He founded an academy of history, which led to useful researches into Spanish antiquities, and another of language and belles lettres, which

... remarkable its especial care, and dis-  
 ... compilation of an excellent dictionary.  
 ... the seed of numerous royal academies  
 ... In other respects Philip left his sub-  
 ... according to their own inclination. The  
 ... way naturally into the Peninsula, when  
 ... Louis XIV. exercised an imposing influence  
 ... of Europe. Had the old national energy re-  
 ... authors would have imitated French elegance  
 ... of embodying their native thoughts and feelings,  
 ... mere servile imitators and pseudo-critics.  
 ... composed chiefly of men of rank and fashion, had  
 ... assumed of the ancient national literature, and to  
 ... regularity of French composition to the brilliancy of  
 ... while, out of compliment to the reigning monarch,  
 ... began to be spoken in the elegant circles of Madrid.  
 ... other hand, the popular party were obstinately attached  
 ... to the oddness, and even the rudeness, of the old authors, but  
 ... remained for some time without any representative among  
 ... of letters. The conflict between the two parties appeared  
 ... on the stage, so that plays imitated from French and even  
 ... English dramas were acted alternately with those of Lope de  
 ... Vega, Calderon, and their successors. Nothing, however, could have  
 ... more incongruous than this mixture; and the tenacity of the  
 ... popular party finally triumphed, and succeeded in placing the  
 ... theatre on much the same footing that it had held in the days of  
 ... Calderon. Encouraged by the Inquisition, whose power was still  
 ... unbroken, a number of religious dramas were added to the already  
 ... large collection; and it was not till the year 1765 that Charles III.  
 ... prohibited these exhibitions, which exposed the country to the  
 ... contempt of every foreigner who witnessed them. He also put  
 ... down the *autos da fé*,\* a recreation scarcely less dear to the  
 ... people than the *Autos Sacramentales*, and for which victims were  
 ... furnished by the hapless sons of Abraham, and here and there a  
 ... native sorcerer. Though the Inquisition continued its cruelties  
 ... in the secrecy of its dungeons, it was not permitted after this  
 ... period to appear in the full splendour of its power, burning its  
 ... victims in public amidst the approving shouts of orthodox spec-  
 ... tators.

Finally, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, sci-  
 ... tific investigation found its way into Spain, and here, as had  
 ... already been the case in every other part of Europe, it gained  
 ... the ascendancy over polite literature. The spirit of experiment

\* *Auto da fé* is the Spanish term, but the Portuguese, *auto da fê*, is that which has  
 obtained currency in Europe.

which sought an accumulation of facts as the foundation of sound philosophy, proved everywhere the deadly foe of fanaticism and poetic enthusiasm. Poetry could never in such circumstances revive in its former magnificence, but a wider field of general utility was opened to elegant prose; and ingenious extravagances were not likely again to prevail.

In a sketch so limited as the present, it would be unreasonable to expect particular notices of works of minor interest which appeared during the period of an expiring, and then slowly reviving, literature. But we propose to glance at the few authors of eminence whose writings have partially enlivened the gloom of the last two centuries.

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DOÑA JUANA INEZ DE LA CRUZ.

No Spanish poetry towards the end of the seventeenth century obtained any degree of celebrity except that of an American lady, Doña Juana Inez de la Cruz, a nun in a convent of Mexico. Her voluminous writings evince that she was on terms of intimacy with the viceroy and other grandees in Mexico, who frequently made demands on her talents, in order to the celebration of public festivals. Beyond this, little is known of her history. Literature has never been much cultivated by the female sex in Spain; and it is worthy of remark that flowers of genius were permitted to bloom in America which would probably have been nipped in the bud had they appeared in the mother-country. This poetic recluse possessed more wit and invention than sentimental enthusiasm; and the creations of her fancy are bold and masculine. She appears not to have courted literary fame, and her poems were published in the first instance by order of the vice-queen of Mexico. Among them are sonnets, some romantic, and some burlesque; a series of boldly-conceived preludes and interludes; and a long allegorical religious drama ('Auto Sacramental'), which is superior to any of the similar productions of Lope de Vega. The Spanish public had never before witnessed so daring a travesty of Roman Catholic Christianity, under the garb of Greek mythology. It would be impossible to give an intelligible analysis of this extraordinary drama without entering into it at considerable length; nor do we think it would be pleasing to the English reader to see the most sacred persons and things connected with our holy religion desecrated by allegorical representation for purposes of amusement. Many of the scenes are romantically and beautifully constructed, and oblige us to do homage to the genius of the poetess, while

the only thing novel or original  
in the history of the poetry of Spain  
the first time



## ISLA.

Pulpit oratory, which had acquired a good deal of floridity from the Avilas and Granadas of the sixteenth century, was now in a state of scandalous degradation. The study of preachers was to compose long and high-sounding periods; to bring together a number of pompous phrases, however unconnected with each other; to transpose their sentences after the complicated construction of the Latin tongue; and to conceal the emptiness of their sermons by filling them with long and learned quotations. Witticisms, jests, and even puns, did not appear to them unworthy of the pulpit; and the more popular orators were not satisfied unless they succeeded in eliciting frequent and violent bursts of laughter from the audience.

Father Isla, a Jesuit, born at Segovia in 1714, a man of immense wit, undertook to reprove these disorders by the publication of a satirical romance, in the hope of producing the same impression on bombastic preachers by the comic life of a monk, that Cervantes had made on spurious romance-writers by the adventures of 'Don Quixote.' This turn for conveying sober and serious truth in a romantic shape and sportive tone is a peculiar characteristic of Spanish literature: we find nothing in the Italian language like the satirical fictions of Cervantes, Quevedo, and Isla.

The book now before us is entitled the 'History of the Famous Preacher, Friar Gerund of Campazas.' The hero is the son of a wealthy farmer of Campazas, who keeps open house for the monks whenever they resort to his village. Their conversation has filled his head with Latin quotations which he does not understand, and theological propositions which he receives in an inverted sense. His brother, a gymnasiarch of San Gregorio, has already distinguished himself by a Latin epistle which the most experienced linguist could neither construe nor translate; and the farmer is ambitious, above all things, that his son Gerund should receive a scholastic education. He sends him, therefore, before he has completed his seventh year, to learn his rudiments from the school-master at Villa Ornata. Hence the author takes occasion to give a burlesque description of the pedantry of a village teacher, and the importance which was at that time attached to the disputes about the ancient and modern orthography. The scene of Gerund appearing before the dominie, who inquires into his attainments, is amusing enough. There is the gravity of the pedant, giving Latin quotations at every opportunity; the trivial nature of the subjects on which he expatiates; and the admiration

to excite in his pupil for the titles and books. Thus he presents to the wondering child a sacred geography, by a German author, with a motto—'To the only three hereditary sovereigns in heaven and earth—Jesus Christ; Frederic-Augustus, Elector of Saxony; and Maurice-William, hereditary Prince of Saxe-Johna.' 'But listen, my children,' exclaims the dominie, 'you shall shortly hear something much superior! Here are the titles which explain the states of which Jesus Christ is hereditary prince. He is the crowned Emperor of the Celestial Host; His Majesty, the Chosen King of Sion; Grand Pontiff of the Christian Church; Archbishop of Souls; Elector of the Truth; Archduke of Glory; Duke of Life; Prince of Peace; Knight of the Gates of Hell; Hereditary Ruler of Nations; Lord of Assize, &c. &c. &c.' It is to be feared that, though this tyro and his teachers are imaginary beings, there was too much reality in the state in which their history is founded.

When the young Gerund has finished his studies, he becomes a preaching friar, and takes for his model the senior of his convent, Friar Blas, of whom a masterly portrait is given. He is a vain man, labouring especially for the applause of the women, of whom his audience is chiefly composed, and whom he endeavours to charm by the elegance of his hood and gown. He commands attention by beginning a sentence which seems blasphemous or immoral, and in the conclusion, which is somewhat delayed, he explains in a natural manner that which has caused so much amazement. On one occasion he exclaims—'To your kindness, gentlemen!' and when the congregation are ready to burst into laughter, he solemnly adds—'this is no subject for mirth; for the world, to mine, and to that of the whole world, has the benefit contributed by his glorious incarnation. It is an article of faith, and I prove it thus—"Propter nos homines, et nostram salutem descendit de coelo et incarnatus est."\*' Whereat a murmur ran through the church.

At length Friar Gerund himself begins to preach, and his superior allows him to deliver his first public sermon in his native town. 'Friar Gerund,' says the author, describing his progress towards the church, 'drew on himself the eyes of all who saw him: he walked gravely forward, his body erect, his face elevated, his eyes tranquil, mild, and benignant; making, by his gravity and reserve, inclinations of his head to the right and left to those who saluted him with their hats; nor did he forget to take out his white cambric handkerchief, with silk

\* Quoted from the Nicene Creed.

tassels at the four corners, to wipe away the perspiration that never broke, and afterwards his silk handkerchief, of rose-colour on one side and pearl on the other, to blow his nose when he had no occasion.' On his arrival at the church, the mass is sung by the licentiate Quixano, and two curates in the neighbourhood serve him as dean and sub-dean. The choir is composed of three village sacristans; and as there is no organ, its place is advantageously supplied by two bagpipes from Galicia, which Gerund's father has hired expressly for the occasion, on the terms of twenty reals to each player, with abundance of eating and drinking. The opening of the sermon is worth translating:—

'If the Holy Ghost has spoken the truth by the mouth of Jesus Christ, what an unhappy wretch am I! I must be lost and utterly confounded, for he has declared that no man can preach or prophesy in his own country—*Nemo propheta in patria sua*. How rash, then, have I been to come forward as a preacher in mine! But pause for one moment, my brethren; for to my great consolation I find that all men are not alike subjected to the truths of the evangelist—*Non omnes obediunt evangelio*—and who knows but this may be one of those numerous theorems which, according to the opinion of a great philosopher, are written only to terrify us—*ad terrorem*?

'These, my brethren, are the first fruits of my oratorical labours, the exordium of my pulpit duties; or, to suit myself to the meanest capacity, this is the first of all my sermons, according to the holy Scripture, which saith—*primum sermonem feci, O Theophile!* But whither doth the bark of my discourse direct its voyage? Harken to me, oh my friends; everything around me betokens a happy issue. On every side I perceive prophetic glimpses of felicity. If the history of the evangelist is worthy of our credence, the Anointed himself preached his first sermon in the very place where he received the holy ablution of the waters of baptism. It is true that the narrative of the evangelist does not expressly declare this, but tacitly conveys it. The Saviour received the frigid purification—*baptizatus est Jesus*; and the azure taffety curtain of heaven was rent asunder—*et ecce aperti sunt caeli*; and the Holy Spirit descended in the shape of a fluttering dove—*et vidi Spiritum Dei descendentem sicut Columbam*. Behold, the Messiah receives the baptism! the veil of the celestial regions is rent! The Holy Ghost descends on his head! And are not the blessed vestiges of that vision here for us to trace? Does not the Heavenly Dove hover around the head of the sacred preacher?

'But it is superfluous to explain, when the words of the oracle are themselves so clear. It is further declared that Jesus, when he was baptized, retired to the desert, or that he was led thither by the devil—*ductus est in desertum ut tentaretur a Diabolo*. He continued there for some time; there he watched, and prayed, and suffered temptation; and the first place to which he went was to preach in a field



in the country—*stetit Jesus in loco campestri*. How can I fail to recognise in this history the events of my own life? I was baptized in this illustrious parish; I withdrew into the desert of religious seclusion, if the devil indeed did not lead me thither—*ductus a Spiritu in desertum ut tentaretur a Diabolo*. And what else can a man do in the desert of a convent than watch, and pray, and fast, and endure temptation? And I escaped from this desert to preach! To preach where? *In loco campestri*! Yes, my friends, in a country place, even at Campazas; a place which calls to our recollection the fields of Damascus, which awakens envy in the plains of Pharsalia, and overwhelms in oblivion the fields of Troy—*et campus ubi Troja fuit!*

Though Father Isla thus ridiculed the bombast of the monks, he was a man even scrupulous and rigid in his own religious profession. All the rules of true pulpit eloquence are incidentally laid down in his work, by introducing the superiors of Friar Gerund as endeavouring by wise advice to induce him to change his style. But the zeal of the author could not save him from the animosity of the mendicant friars, who considered themselves the principal objects of the satire. They discovered him under the fictitious name which he had assumed in the title-page, and the book was condemned by the Inquisition. This, however, did not hinder its reputation; and the 'History of Friar Gerund' is justly regarded as the most eminent production of Spanish genius in the eighteenth century.

Father Isla wrote, besides, an abridgment of Spanish History, which is much esteemed. He also, by a skilful translation, gave or restored to his country the well-known romance of 'Gil Blas,' which is supposed to have been originally borrowed by Le Sage from a Spanish manuscript in the library of the Escorial. It is difficult otherwise to conceive how a Frenchman, entirely unacquainted with the country, should have been able to paint so faithfully the intrigues, the manners, and the customs of Spain at the court as well as in the city, and in public as well as in private life. The style of Isla is always correct and elegant; and he never offends against the strictest delicacy and propriety, as was too much the case with the French comic writers of his age. On the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Peninsula, he retired to Bologna in Italy, where he died in 1783.



## LA HUERTA AND SEDANO.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the lingering affection for national literature seemed to revive within the little circle of Spanish authors. The mere correctness acquired from the imitation of the French ceased to satisfy them, and they longed to see it subordinated to become but the vehicle of Spanish genius. The first who ventured openly to advocate these views was the patriotic Vicente Garcia de la Huerta, a member of the Spanish Academy, and librarian to the king. None but a man so accredited by his literary position could have hoped successfully to oppose the fashionable opinion on this subject. In other respects La Huerta was scarcely equal to the task he had undertaken. He was a man of genuine poetic feeling, but as a critic, by no means competent to contend in argument with men of Luzan's coolness and systematic knowledge. He did not understand the true principles on which Spanish poetry might have been defended against French criticism; but feeling served him in some measure instead of judgment, and he abandoned theory whenever he could not reconcile it to his taste. He endeavoured to stir up the national pride of his countrymen, and attacked the admired 'Coryphæi' of the French Parnassus with a degree of bitterness which might have brought his taste into question, had he not proved himself a poet before he entered the lists as a critic. A piscatory eclogue, which he had read at a distribution of academic prizes in 1760, had attracted the attention of the public; and his romances in the ancient style, his commentaries, and his sonnets, were remarkably successful. But he had greater difficulties to overcome in endeavouring to restore the fame of the Spanish drama. He was not poet enough to advance in the course in which Calderon himself had halted; but as the plays of that dramatist were still regarded with approbation, he wrote a prologue for one of them, and at length, believing he could rely on a certain portion of public favour, he brought forward his first essay in dramatic art. This was the tragedy of 'Rachel,' which was intended to unite the brilliancy of Spanish poetry with the dignity of the French tragic style, without confining it to the conventional forms of the French drama.

The public seconded his patriotic intentions with the utmost enthusiasm. It was represented at every theatre in Spain; even before it was printed, above two thousand copies were taken in manuscript, and many were sent to America. In vain did the Gallicists rise in opposition; he answered their quibbles with

haughty contempt, while to a patronising public he always addressed himself with the utmost modesty.

La Huerta's 'Rachel' cannot be considered as a masterpiece, but it is a noble effort of national feeling, endeavouring to restore the credit of the Spanish drama. The subject is taken from the early history of Castile. Alphonso IX., who was defeated by the Moors in the terrible battle of Alarcos in 1195, was attached to a beautiful Jewess, whom both the nobles and the people agreed in condemning as the cause of the calamities that had befallen the monarchy. They implore him to overcome a passion which they regard as dishonourable to the nation; and while the king is hesitating between his duty to his people and his love for the fair Jewess, the spirit of discontent breaks out in open rebellion. Rachel is surprised in the palace while the king is out hunting, and her base counsellor Reuben kills her to save his own life. But he himself is slain by the king on his return from the chase. The tragedy is divided into three acts or *jornadas*, according to ancient Spanish usage; but in other respects this great opponent of the French drama has not kept himself free from its rules. The dialogue proceeds uniformly in iambic blank verse, without the introduction of sonnets or redondillas; and there are no striking scenes, although the deaths at the conclusion are represented on the stage. The language is dignified throughout, and in several scenes the pathos is complete; but the characters are indifferently managed. The beautiful heroine appears so seldom, that we gain little acquaintance with her; Reuben is a stupid, contemptible Jew, whose lamentations in the moment of peril border on the ludicrous; and the feeble character of the king, changing his resolution on every new impression, often approaches caricature. The author has, however, succeeded admirably in the characters of two Spanish grandees—the one a base courtier, named Manrique; the other, Garcia de Castro, a personification of the high and honourable spirit of ancient Spanish chivalry.

In another piece, called 'Agamemnon Vengado,' Huerta made a successful attempt to embody a classic subject in the romantic form. Here he approached a step nearer Calderon, by mixing with his iambics octaves and lyric verses.

After he had unquestionably acquired the right of pronouncing an opinion on the literature of his country, La Huerta published his 'Teatro Español,' a selection from the incalculable store of Spanish dramas. Above three-fourths of it are 'Comedies of the Cloak and Sword,' chiefly from the pen of Calderon; and he has not admitted a single play of Lope de Vega, or any of the 'Autos Sacramentales.' His view was to select only those Spanish comedies which are distinguished for elegance in execu-

tion, as well as ingenuity in invention, and to mark his hostility to the French drama, which he criticises severely in the preface. He has not exposed to criticism the most beautiful plays of the great masters, because these contain irregularities and inelegances which would have betrayed the cause he so anxiously desired to serve. On the whole, *La Huerta* appears to have contributed more than any of his contemporaries to produce a reaction in favour of Spanish literature.

With views similar to those of *La Huerta*, Don Juan Lopez de Sedano published, in 1768, his '*Parnaso Español*;' a collection of the poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, accompanied with biographical and literary notices calculated to make the Spanish public once more acquainted with authors whom it ought never to have forgotten.

Sanchez went farther back, and in 1779 published his '*Poesias Anteriores al Siglo XV.*;' a collection of the legendary treasures of the heroic ages, beginning with the poem of the *Cid*.

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BENITO FEYJOÓ.

1676—1764.

It must be evident to the intelligent reader of the foregoing pages that something else was wanted in Spain for the advancement of elegant literature besides a mere reformation from bad taste; and that neither the effort of Luzan to lay on a French polish, nor that of Huerta to restore its own native brilliancy, was the great desideratum, but solid and substantial materials. The national mind had remained in an infantile state, or rather had pined away, and become dwarfed for want of its proper nourishment. It had been amused with the toys of beautiful fiction, but not fed with knowledge; and its creations, therefore, could hardly be better than empty bubbles. The moral and physical sciences, which had been giving intellectual vigour and enlargement in every other part of Europe, were forbidden to cross the Pyrenees; the scholastic philosophy was still maintained as the highest form of merely intellectual culture; the system of Copernicus was looked upon as contrary to the inspired record; while the philosophy of Bacon, and the very existence of mathematical science, were generally unknown even to the graduates of universities. It seemed as if the faculties of thinking and reasoning were becoming extinct in the Peninsula.

The introduction of a better state of things was due to a quiet monk, Benito Feyjoó, who was born in 1676, and early destined



for the church. He was an industrious student rather than an original genius; instead of contriving any system of his own, he managed in early life to obtain a knowledge of what had been done in Italy, France, and England for the advancement of science; and, so far as the restraints of his ecclesiastical position permitted, he made himself acquainted with the truths brought to light by such men as Galileo, Bacon, Newton, Leibnitz, Pascal, and Cassendi. Shocked to find by what a great gulf his country was separated from the rest of Europe with respect to knowledge, he determined it should be so no longer. Establishing himself in a Benedictine convent at Oviedo, he devoted himself to study, and relied almost entirely on the press as the means of enlightening his countrymen. Between 1726 and 1760 he published a series of essays, in which he ventured to assert that comets and eclipses were not supernatural phenomena portending disastrous events; that the arts of magic and divination were but impostures; and the received system of dialectics and metaphysics were mere jargon. He laid down such rules of historical evidence as were calculated to exclude most of the earlier traditions of the country, and explained the laws of inductive reasoning in physical science, in suchwise as to overturn much of the prevailing superstition. The opposition raised against him only drew to his works the attention he desired. Even the Inquisition summoned him in vain, for it was impossible to question that he was a sincere and devout Roman Catholic; and he had been careful not to interfere directly with any abuses sanctioned by the church. Fifteen editions of his principal work were printed within half a century; and before his death, which happened in 1764, he had the pleasure of seeing that an impulse in the right direction had been imparted to the national mind.

The policy of Charles III. (1759-1788) was highly favourable to this movement. He abridged the power of the Inquisition, and forbade the condemnation of any book till its author or publisher had been heard in its defence; he invited the suggestion of improved plans of study, made arrangements for popular education, and raised the tone of instruction in those institutions which acknowledged his control. Finally, perceiving the Jesuits to be the most active opponents of these reforms, he expelled them from every part of his dominions, both in Europe and America, breaking up their schools and confiscating their revenues. It is painful to be obliged to recollect, that before this newly-infused life and health could have circulated so generally as to revive that elegant literature which is one of the choicest fruits of true civilisation, it was checked by the anarchy introduced by the French revolutionary wars in the reign of Charles



IV., and that with the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in 1814 came also the restoration of civil despotism and the powers of the Inquisition.

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## YRIARTE.

The later part of the last century gave birth to some lyric poets, and to several works of originality. Tomas de Yriarte, general archivist to the supreme council, after acquiring some reputation by various literary labours, obtained decided favour among the elegant portion of the Spanish public by his 'Literary Fables,' first published in the year 1782. Yriarte conceived the novel idea of making literary and moral truths themes for fables in the style of Æsop, and he composed them in every variety of verse that seemed at all suitable. No classical fabulist had hitherto appeared in Spanish literature, and Yriarte's work might be mistaken for a happy imitation of La Fontaine. He had the same true feeling for delicate harmony; and that lively infantine playfulness which unfolds the truth, as it were, in graceful gossip without the appearance of didactic design. Even when the leading idea presents no remarkable incident, these fables please by their simplicity. As an example, we translate one which describes the ass finding a flute in a meadow:—

Call it tame or witty,  
This little romance  
Occurred to the author  
As it were by chance.

Into a meadow  
Once casting a glance,  
I saw an ass grazing—  
Just by mere chance.

A flute was there laid,  
Which a peasant of France  
Had left on the grass—  
And this was by chance.

To smell this new toy  
The ass made advance,  
And breathed through the lip-hole—  
This, too, was by chance.

The breath found its way,  
And the ass looked askance,  
For the flute gave a sound—  
It was by mere chance.

'Bravo!' cried the donkey,  
'Who now will dispute  
That I'm a musician!—  
I play on the flute!'

Thus sometimes 'tis seen,  
In life's merry dance,  
That a booby succeeds  
For once by mere chance.

The following is one of those written in simple rondeaux rhymed like the ancient romances, and considered to possess the superiority in point of graceful execution:—

*The Bear, the Monkey, and the Pig.*

With a half-taught bear was strolling,  
Peer and lane, a Piedmontese;  
And the brute, to serve his master,  
Strive to dance, though ill at ease.

Meeting with an agile monkey—  
'Do you think I dance with grace?'  
Asked the bear. 'Oh no, 'tis clumsy!'  
Said the ape with proud grimace.

'Nonsense, I see you do not flatter,'  
Sneeringly answered, said the bear;  
'It is not my movement graceful!  
Nay, my song, sensed my air!'

As it chanced, a pig was present;  
Loud he grunted out, 'Well done!  
Sure such power and grace of movement  
Ne'er was seen beneath the sun!'

Bruin, hearing this eulogium,  
Twinkled modestly his eye,  
And expressed his own conclusion  
To the critic of the sty.

'When the ape condemned my dancing,  
Somewhat did his words appal;  
But your praise is proof o'erwhelming,  
That I cannot dance at all!'

Authors, learn a wholesome lesson,  
Judge your merits by this rule:  
Bad—if skilful men approve not,  
Worse—if lauded by a fool.

Considerable praise has been bestowed on a didactic poem by Yriarte, entitled 'Music.' It contains many passages which are by no means destitute of poetic beauty; but the scientific portion of it, which includes three-fourths of the whole, is little more than elegantly-versified prose.

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MELENDEZ.

But a favourite of the Graces worthy of the best times of Spanish poetry remains to be noticed. Juan Melendez Valdes was a doctor of law and professor of polite literature in Salamanca. From his youth he was a follower of Horace, Tibullus, Anacreon, and Villegas; and if he has not attained to the luxurious graces of his Spanish model, he has depicted amatory ideas and images with a moral delicacy to which Villegas attached too little importance. The joys and sorrows of rustic love, the leisure and amusements of a country life, are the favourite subjects of Melendez; and nothing can surpass some of his descriptions in the graceful colouring of tender feelings. The Spanish Academy proposed in the year 1780 to award a prize for the best poem on the pleasures of rural life, and on this occasion Melendez was the successful rival of Yriarte.

Besides his Anacreontic poems, Melendez wrote popular songs, lyric romances, elegies, and sonnets; and his verse was considered in sweetness, if not in strength, to be such a return to the tones of Garcilaso as had not been heard in Spain for nearly a hundred years. He was also the author of several moral and philosophical treatises, and of the dramatic form of the story of Camacho in 'Don Quixote.'

But he did not altogether wisely improve his literary success. Having become a favourite with many persons of distinction at court, he sought and obtained an appointment under the government, and becoming identified with its fortunes, became involved in its disasters, when it was overthrown by the armies of Napoleon in 1808. Unhappily, he then attached himself to the French party, and drew on himself the hatred of the patriotic. Once he was actually led out to be shot by the excited populace of Oviedo, where he had been sent as a commissioner by Joseph Bonaparte. On another occasion his house at Salamanca was sacked, and his valuable library destroyed by the French, whose interests he had espoused. When all was lost, he fled; but before crossing the frontier he knelt down and kissed the utmost spot of earth that he could call Spain, exclaiming that he should never again tread his native soil. He lived four miserable years

an exile in the south of France, where he died (1817) in deep poverty.

It is with regret that we have seen the brilliant illusions of this literature vanish in succession from our sight as we have passed through its successive periods, and that we have felt the lively interest excited by illustrious names and chivalrous deeds subsiding into pity and contempt for this once-exalted but now fallen people. The inspiration of the earlier ages is no more, and modern cultivation in Spain has been too imperfect to produce anything to reconcile us to its disappearance. The age of chivalry was indeed, strictly speaking, the one period of Spanish literature; and all the images, adventures, feelings, and opinions that adorned its pages in later times, were drawn from the treasures of its ancient romances. The period introduced by Boscan did but clothe the old ideas in a new dress, and when the drama appeared, its best efforts consisted in producing these beautiful fictions for a third time in a new form. There has never been that freedom of thought, and that intellectual culture that would have given rise to a new set of ideas, and prepared the Spaniards to run a literary career similar to that of the other nations of Europe. During the present century, it is true, there has not only been great attention bestowed in collecting and republishing all the best works that Spain produced in her happiest days, but in almost every department of science and literature there have arisen authors respectable and even eminent in their own country. Few works, however, if any, have appeared of such a character as to command European attention, or demand, even in these days of international intercourse, to be translated into the languages of England, France, or Italy.



## PORTUGUESE LITERATURE.

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THE kingdom of Portugal was long considered only as an integral part of Spain, and its inhabitants called themselves Spaniards, conferring on their neighbours the distinctive appellation of Castilians. Their language was originally the same as the Galician; and had Portugal remained a province of Spain, its peculiar dialect would probably, like that of Arragon, have been driven from the fields of literature by the Castilian. But at the close of the eleventh century Alphonso VI., celebrated in Spanish history for his triumphs over the Moors, gave Portugal as the dowry of his daughter on her marriage with Henry of Burgundy, with permission to call his own whatever accessions to it the young prince might be able to conquer from the Moorish territory. Alphonso Henriquez, the son of this pair, was saluted king of Portugal by his soldiers on the battle-field of Castro-Verd in the year 1139, his kingdom comprising all the provinces we now call Portugal, except Algarva. Thenceforward the Portuguese became a separate nation from the Spaniards, and their language asserted for itself an independent existence. Still, however, the Castilian was considered the superior vehicle for literature, and while few Portuguese writers wholly disused it, there were many who employed no other.

The Portuguese language is in truth a kind of contracted Spanish; discarding a number of the Latin consonants, it has a softer, but at the same time a truncated and incomplete sound, compared with the sonorous beauty of the Castilian; and it has acquired, no one seems to know how, a predominance of nasal sounds, stronger than even those of the French.

The people, as well as the language of Portugal, possessed a distinctive character. The spacious and fertile plains were abandoned

to pasturage, instead of being cultivated by husbandry; and the number of shepherds in proportion to the rest of the population was so great, that the idea of a rural life among them appears always to have been connected with the care of flocks. At the same time, their long extent of sea-coast invited to the pursuits of commerce and navigation; and the nation, thus divided into hardy navigators, soldiers, and shepherds, seemed better calculated for the display of energy, valour, and enterprise, than for the cultivation of a sedentary industry. Having been less habituated to the pleasures of society than to active intercourse with society, they were far less haughty and fanatical than the Castilians; and the numerous Moorish Minarets that were incorporated among the houses, gave their feelings and manners a much stronger tincture of Islamism. The passion of love seemed to occupy a larger share of their existence, and their poetry was more devoted to it than that of any other people of Europe.

To conceive accurately the Portuguese may appear to us, it must be remembered, that they have occupied a proud position in the annals of the world. A mere handful of knights had achieved conquests and victories which, within a century, were deemed almost impossible among the kingdoms of Europe; and for 800 years the dominions of the Portuguese kingdom were almost everywhere to be encountered upon. Early in the fifteenth century, the enterprising spirit led them to cross the Atlantic, and to plant the banner of the five escutcheons on the coast of Brazil. In succeeding reigns many other cities were discovered, and it is not improbable that these conquests would have been followed by the formation of still more extensive kingdoms, had not another discovery, that of the Cape of Barbary, had not another discovery, that of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1487 Bartolomeo Diaz discovered the Cape of Good Hope, and immediately another springing from the same source, Vasco da Gama pointed out the way to the East Indies, and opened a new trade to India. Within fifteen years the Portuguese empire was founded in Hindoostan, and the Portuguese flag was hoisted over Portugal, while Spain was engaged in the conquest of the New World. It is easy to imagine the enthusiasm and the exultation of among the people; the high hopes of national greatness, and the high hopes of national glory, which were then kindled, and which we have had occasion to remark, in the case of Spain, are kindled when each man looks on himself as a conqueror, and the land is peculiarly favourable to the development of genius, and especially to the spirit of poetry.

With all this, Portuguese literature is rich in nothing but lyric and heroic poetry, if we except one splendid specimen of epic. *Prose* is almost a barren field, presenting here and there a respect-

able history or biography; so that scarcely anything worth glean-  
ing is found either before or after the sixteenth century. During  
that age, the happy effects of patriotic valour and hardy enterprise  
were seen in the expanding blossoms of the nation's genius; but  
ere they had time to produce anything mature and substantial,  
the despotism of the monarchy, the horrors of the Inquisition, and  
the more insidious influence of wealth and luxury, had done their  
work of destruction, and the prostrate nation has ever since been  
reaping the bitter fruits.

We propose to glance at the most remarkable of the love-sick  
poets who flourished in the fifteenth century, and then to notice  
those who, in the sixteenth, improved on their lays by intro-  
ducing Italian and classical refinements. This will prepare the way  
for appreciating the merits of Camoens, the great epic poet, after  
whom we shall introduce Gil Vicente, who made a promising com-  
mencement for a national drama. It must, then, be our unpleasant  
duty to mark the sudden and rapid decline of this country's lit-  
erature, relieved only by a few successful efforts in prose.

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MACIAS.

At the head of the poetical school of the fifteenth century  
stands Macias, surnamed the Enamoured; of all poets of  
the Peninsula most celebrated for the influence of love on his  
mortal destiny. He distinguished himself as a warrior against the  
Moors of Granada, and as a poet in the retinue of the Marquis of  
Villena.\* But though this nobleman appreciated the talents of  
Macias, he did not approve of poetic fancies being interwoven  
with the affairs of real life. He prohibited an intrigue in which  
the poet had engaged with a ward of his, who had been married  
to another gentleman. Macias believed that, as a true and gallant  
knight, he could not better prove the constancy of his love than  
by disobeying his patron at all hazards. The marquis, however,  
was not to be trifled with, and availing himself of his power as  
grandmaster of the order of Calatrava, he threw the refractory  
poet into a prison at Arjonilla which was under his control. Here  
the disconsolate Macias composed his songs on ill-fated love,  
making little of the hardships of captivity in comparison with  
the pangs of absence from his mistress. The husband of the lady  
intercepted one of these effusions, and resolved on a summary  
and dreadful revenge. He set out immediately for Arjonilla,

\* See page 117.

and hastening to the prison, recognised Macias through the bars of a window, threw his javelin at him, and killed him on the spot. The weapon was suspended over the poet's tomb in the church of St Catherine, with this simple inscription—'*Aqui yace Macias d'Enamorado*'—'Here lies Macias the Enamoured.'

Nearly all the productions of Macias are now lost, but the unfortunate stanzas which were the occasion of his untimely end have been preserved:—

I am a captive, yet 'tis not my chains  
That move to pity every passer-by,  
And makes him ask what more than mortal pains  
Wring every tear and heave each mournful sigh.  
It was to gain a blessing still more dear  
I aimed at fortune proud and honours high,  
And therefore doubly humbled am I here,  
Without a friend to cheer the tedious hour,  
Or aid of my beloved regards the tears I pour.

Now have I learned this lesson to my cost—  
That my madly ventures thus to soar  
Shall not be cherished hopes far more than lost:  
His misadventure sink him in a fall still lower.  
I have no complaint: my boding heart,  
Vexed with grief and disappointment sore,  
Sees no end in mortal smart,  
Nor in heavenly looks and cold disdain:  
For my warning proved in vain!

#### BERNARDIM.

Between the years 1480 and 1521 appeared Bernardim Ribeyro, who has been named the *Shakspeare* of Portugal. He received a literary education, and afterwards obtained an appointment at the court of Emmanuel, summoned the Great. Here he found an object which enlisted his poetic fancy, and gave rise to some of his most exquisite effusions. But his happiness appears to have been blighted by the same means, and he is said to have spent whole nights in the woods, singing to the murmuring brooks the tale of his woes in strains of tenderness and despair. It is supposed by some that the Infanta Beatrice was the lady in question, but the poet studiously veils the secret of his heart. We also know that he was married, and it is said that he was tenderly attached to his consort; but whether his married life was before or his romantic attachment, or contemporary with it, we



have no means of knowing, as we are not in possession of the respective epochs of his life. The reader will perhaps judge, from the following stanzas, that he did not consider his passion for his mistress inconsistent with the matrimonial fidelity due to a wife :—

I am not married, lady,  
 For though I've given my hand,  
 My heart is still unwedded,  
 And it is at your command.  
 Not dreaming that I e'er should see  
 Such charms as I in you discover,  
 I gave my hand without compunction,  
 In matrimonial junction—  
 A husband, not a lover !  
 My eyes and heart are still my own,  
 In which, dear lady, you may see  
 Your lovely image on the throne :  
 Yes, all belongs to thee  
 Except one of my hands !  
 They say a marriage is not binding  
 Unless into the silken bands  
 Both enter freely, pleasure finding  
 In giving up their all  
 With perfect resignation.  
 My thoughts, my liberty, my rest—  
 Lady, whatever mine I call—  
 Is shined within your lovely breast ;  
 And it is no vexation,  
 But rather cause of pleasure,  
 That I one little hand have lost,  
 Since you, meanwhile, may justly boast,  
 Yours is the rest, with love in fullest measure.

The eclogues of Ribeyro are his most celebrated productions, and very superior to those of Juan de la Encina, who flourished in Spain about the same time. But though they exhibit much feeling, the ideas are poor, and there is a diffuseness and inaccuracy about them which bespeaks the infancy of composition. Ribeyro's style is, in its principal features, that of the old Roman, and his eclogues are for the most part in redondillas.

The idea that pastoral is the poetic model of human life became a sort of romantic creed with the Portuguese, and it threw a character of sweetness and elegance over the poetry of the sixteenth century, though at the same time it produced a monotony and tedious affectation which runs through all their works.

There remains a singular work of Ribeyro in prose, an unfinished romance, entitled 'The Innocent Maid,' in which, under feigned

names and obscure allusions, he discloses in part the history of his own adventures. It is a mixed poetic and chivalrous story, and it gave birth to a host of similar romances both in Spain and France. Bouterwek, who is almost the only authority we have on Portuguese literature, affirms that, in point of intricacy, this fragment has no parallel in the whole range of romantic literature; that it would be impossible to furnish an abstract of it; and that, indeed, so great is its obscurity, it requires the utmost effort of attention to comprehend the circumstances. He adds that the prolixity of the narrative, and the monotony of amorous complaints, are tedious: but it is nevertheless easy to recognise a spirit truly poetic: more remarkable, however, for susceptibility than for energy.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE ITALIAN STYLE

##### SEA DE MIRANDA.

John III., the successor of Emmanuel on the Portuguese throne, failed to secure to his subjects the prosperity they had enjoyed under his father. He not only involved himself imprudently in distant wars, but he invaded the civil and religious liberties of his European subjects. In 1540 he introduced the Inquisition; he also received the Jesuits into his kingdom, and consigned to them the education of the young Don Sebastian, the heir to the throne. But though the weakness and folly of John were preparing the ruin of the monarchy, the patronage he bestowed on literature was the means of raising that of Portugal to a high degree of excellence.

The introduction of the Italian style into Portuguese poetry was not attended by any remarkable struggle; the more educated people were not so decidedly attached to the old romance versification as the Castilians were, nor was it so difficult to bend their language to the Italian forms. Moreover, the poet with whose works the new era commences, was so successful in seizing the delicate tone by which the blending of the Italian and the old Portuguese styles was to be effected, that the national taste seemed to have found in him exactly what it wanted, and the innovation was accommodated to Portuguese feeling in the most pleasing manner.

The romantic Theocritus, Sea de Miranda, has already been noticed in the History of Spanish Literature. He was born of a noble family at Coimbra in the year 1495. His parents designed

him for the profession of jurisprudence, and for their gratification he pursued it till the death of his father. He then consulted only his own taste, and travelled through Spain and Italy in order to gain an acquaintance with the literature of those countries. On his return, he received an appointment at the court of Lisbon, and was looked upon as one of the most pleasing and accomplished men of his age. It is related of him, however, that he would often sit silent and abstracted in mixed companies, and that tears, of which no one understood the cause, would flow plentifully from his eyes, while he seemed quite unconscious of the circumstance, and indifferent to the observation thus attracted towards him. These emotions were of course attributed to poetic thoughts and romantic attachments. One of his eclogues, in which a Portuguese nobleman considered himself as the object of unpleasant allusion, drew upon the poet a quarrel, which became so warm that he was obliged to quit the court. He retired to his country-seat, and devoted himself to literary pursuits and the cultivation of domestic happiness. He insisted on marrying a lady who was neither young nor handsome, and whom he had never seen, having been captivated only by her reputation for amiability and discretion. He became so attached to her, that when she died, which was after some years, he remained an inconsolable widower; he renounced all the previous pursuits and purposes of his life; he refused even to shave his beard and pare his nails; and three years after, he followed her to the grave. He died, universally beloved, in the year 1558, aged sixty-three.

Saa de Miranda is chiefly celebrated for his lyric and pastoral poetry, of which the following may be taken as a pleasing specimen:—

As now the sun grows broader in the west,  
 The birds retire, the cooler breezes blow,  
 The murmuring waters from the mountains flow,  
 And mortal cares and fears are hushed to rest.  
 But woe's the heart that trusts to scenes like these!—  
 Their peaceful beauties ever flit away  
 As clouds and shadows on a summer day—  
 Changeful as to the bark the fitful breeze.

How often have I strayed 'mid summer flowers,  
 And birds that sang of love in verdant bowers!  
 But now the autumn's latest blast has blown,  
 And all are mute and withered. Yet the spring  
 Shall bid them live again, and bloom, and sing!  
 I—I alone unchanged, shall sorrow on!

In the collection of Saa de Miranda's works a series of poetical epistles follow the eclogues. They form a union of romantic and

didactic verse, of which the attraction consists chiefly in the truth and feeling it displays; for it is admitted to be somewhat verbose and superficial. At the time these epistles made their appearance, there was nothing else of the same kind in the language, but they were soon excelled by other writers. In one of them there is a singular passage, in which the poet adverts with sad foreboding to the progress of luxury and dissipation in his native country:—

Our ancestors, 'tis said, were rough and rude.  
 They could not read, but virtue's sacred rules  
 Alone they knew—their study to be good :  
 No adepts they in tactics of the schools.  
 And what has changed the manners which of yore  
 Our nation boasted as its highest praise ?  
 Is it our classic lore, our poets' lays ?  
 Oh no ! but perfumes brought from India's shore.  
 These foreign mimeries, I greatly fear,  
 Will yet unnerve our arm, and blunt our spear ;  
 As Hannibal, who could not conquered be  
 At Trebia, Cannæ, or Thrasimenê,  
 In Capua fell, a slave to luxury.

This prediction was but too soon verified; and the increase of wealth, which was often obtained by the infliction of ferocious cruelties, gave rise to profusion, indolence, and corruption, which shed a baneful influence over the country.

Montemayor was contemporary with Miranda, and also a native of Portugal; but he declined holding any literary position in his own country. He introduced the pastoral romance into Spain, and all his works are in the Castilian language except two little songs.

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FERREIRA.

The next century, however, produced a poet who devoted his talents exclusively to his country, and obtained the appellation of the Horace of Portugal. Antonio Ferreira was born at Lisbon in the year 1528. His parents, who belonged to the highest class of nobility, looked forward to his filling some important office in the state, and sent him to study law at Coimbra. While at his studies the works of Horace engaged his admiration, but they did not lead him to write Latin verses like his fellow-students, who disdained the vernacular. Ferreira was such an enthusiastic admirer of his mother-tongue, that he would not compose a line in any other, not



even in Spanish. He formed his taste by the study of Horace, and set it as the great object of his ambition to become a classical writer, and to impart to his native poetry a new and more elevated diction. With this view he found it necessary to abandon the old versification, and adopt the Italian structure; and so assiduous were his labours, that at the age of twenty-nine he published the first collection of his works, consisting chiefly of sonnets. In these pursuits he was joined by several young men of talent, who formed a literary circle of some influence. On quitting the university, he repaired to the court, having been appointed a gentleman of the royal household. The most brilliant prospects were now open before him; but in his forty-first year he fell a victim to the plague which raged in Lisbon in 1569.

The epistles of Ferreira are his best productions. But while in all his works there is much correctness and even elegance, in none do we recognise those higher efforts of genius which strike the imagination or fire the spirit. The distinctive feeling which marks this poet is his patriotism; and it was this enthusiasm alone that made him a great man. The glory, the advancement, and the civilisation of his country were his darling themes; and he exhorts his friends 'not to suffer the Muses in Portugal to speak any language but Portuguese.'

Many similar writers shed a lustre over this the brightest, and indeed the only brilliant period of Portuguese literature. They are all more remarkable for taste and elegance of language than for richness of invention; and unless we possess an insatiable appetite for love-ditties, and untiring patience for the repetition of the same ideas, we must weary in their perusal.

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#### EPIC POETRY.

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##### CAMOENS.

We are now prepared to introduce to the reader that illustrious poet who has long been considered the chief, and almost the only boast of his country in a literary point of view. Camoens is indeed the only Portuguese writer that has obtained celebrity beyond the Peninsula: his works alone have been translated into most of the modern languages, and he has been counted worthy

of a time among the epic poets of Europe, in the category with Homer, Virgil, Milton, and Homer.

There is, however, one singular exception to the common remark, that the names of ancient literary men are generally maintained, not worth of interest. He was the son of Dom Vasco da Gama, the commander of a ship of war, which was wrecked in the west of India; and it is believed by some that this event took place even before the birth of the poet, his misfortune thus beginning with his very existence. The exact date of his birth is not known, but it is supposed to have been about the year 1469. He passed his studies at Coimbra, where he wrote several romances, and other works, which have been preserved. It appears, however, that his talents did not gain for him the regard of Francis and his associates, who were deeply engaged in sinning their native poetry with classic learning, and had little sympathy for the glowing imagination of the young Camoens. Soon after his return to Lisbon, in his nineteenth year, he happened to meet at church a lady of the court, with whom he fell desperately in love. 'The charms of the Portuguese,' says Seneca, 'are the very cradle of intrigue,' hence it was not long before Camoens found means of making known his attachment. But his mistress, according to his view of matters, was severely punctilious, and after many minutes of adoration and supplication, he succeeded only in procuring from her a silken fillet that adorned her head. It would appear that he became impatient of this servile service, and committed some indiscretion, in consequence of which he was ordered to quit Lisbon. In the hope of bettering his fortune, and being deemed worthy at some future time of the hand of the fair Catarina, he enlisted under the banners of King John III. and accompanied an expedition against the Moors in Africa. In an engagement before Ceuta, he lost his right eye by some splinters from the deck on which he was stationed. On his return to Lisbon, in the expectation of obtaining some recompense for his services and his sufferings, he found all his claims disregarded, and himself, from his unfortunate mutilation, an object of ridicule in the female circles where he had before been welcomed with distinction. Disappointed and indignant, he again left his country, and set sail for the East Indies. The squadron with which he embarked consisted of four vessels, of which three foundered at sea, and only that in which Camoens sailed reached the port of Goa in safety. At this time the king of Cochin applied to the Portuguese for assistance against the Pimenta Isles, and Camoens joined the armament. Victory declared on their side, and the enemy sued for peace. 'With little trouble,' says Camoens, 'we destroyed the quiver-

armed people, and punished them with fire and sword. We were detained in the island only two days, which were the last for some who passed the cold waters of the Styx.\* It appears, in fact, that nearly all his companions in arms fell victims to the insalubrity of the climate, while he returned in safety to Goa. A letter written to a friend about this time is worth quotation:—

‘When I left Portugal as one bound for another world, I sent all the hopes I had cherished with a crier before them, to be hanged as coiners of false money; and I cast aside all thoughts of home, so that there might not remain in me one stone upon another. Thus situated, the last words I uttered were those of Scipio Africanus, “*Ingrata patria, non possidebis ossa mea*,” for without having committed any sin that would doom me to three days of purgatory, I have suffered three thousand from evil tongues, worse intentions, and wicked designs, born of mere envy—

——— “to view  
Their darling ivy, torn from them, take root  
Against another wall.”\*

‘Even friendships softer than wax have been warmed into hatred, and set on fire; whence my fame has received more blisters than the skin of a roasted pig. In short, sir, I know not how to congratulate myself sufficiently on having escaped all the snares which surrounded me in that country by coming to this, where I am more respected than the bulls of Merciana,† and live more peacefully than in the cell of a friar.’ . . . . .

Still destitute of regular employment, Camoens next year joined the expedition of Vasconcellos against the corsairs of the Red Sea; and on his return to Goa wrote a most beautiful canzone, descriptive of the wretchedness he endured in that corner of the world, which he portrays as ‘near a barren, rocky, sterile mountain, useless, bare, bald, and shapeless, abhorred of nature, where no wild bird flies, nor wild beast crouches—where no stream flows, nor any fountain springs, and whose name is *Felix*.’

At Goa Camoens could not behold without indignation the abuses of the Portuguese government, and instead of attempting to conciliate the administration, he wrote a bitter satire on its conduct, entitled ‘Follies in India.’ The viceroy immediately banished him to the island of Macaõ, on the coast of China, where his necessities compelled him to accept the situation of commissary for the effects of the deceased. He remained there five years, and employed himself chiefly in completing that great epic poem which was to hand down his name to posterity. There is still to be seen,

\* These lines are a quotation from the first eclogue of Garcilaso de la Vega, already mentioned in his place in Spanish Literature.

† Merciana, a few miles from Lisbon, is a place where bulls are bred for the bull-fights.

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point of the isthmus which unites the town  
continent, a kind of natural gallery formed  
naturally almost suspended in the air, com-  
prehensive view. Here he is said to have  
of the epic muse; tradition has conferred on  
of the Grotto of Camoens; and its English  
surrounded it with a plantation of trees, and crowned  
temple.

state of his situation at Macao enabled him to  
his property; but no advantages which it held out  
him to remain longer than he was obliged. Obtaining  
from the new viceroy, he returned to Goa, carrying with  
in fortune; but he was wrecked at the mouth of the  
and with difficulty reached the shore, swimming with  
and bearing his poem above the water in the other,  
nothing else that he possessed was lost for ever. Soon  
in return to Goa he was accused of malversation in the office  
at Macao; and though he successfully repelled  
charges, yet he was suffered to linger in prison on account of a  
which he owed to a man of wealth and consequence.  
at the generous intervention of a few literary friends he was  
enabled to recover his liberty, and take his passage to his native  
land, where he hoped that his enemies would cease to persecute  
him.

At the time the famous battle in Portugal it was ravaged  
by a dreadful plague, and in the midst of the universal distress  
were renewed the same curiosity about the poet and his 'Lusiad.'  
The political state of the kingdom was also disadvantageous.  
King Sebastian was still a minor, and completely under the  
authority of the regent. He consented, however, to accept  
the dedication of the poem, and secured to its author a pension  
amounting to about 25 scolding. He was even in actual want  
of bread, for which he was partly indebted to a black servant  
who had accompanied him from India, and who was in the  
habit of standing out at night to beg in the streets for what  
might support his master during the following day. But more  
aggravated evils were in store for the unfortunate poet. Sebas-  
tian perished in his disastrous expedition against Morocco,  
and with him expired the royal House of Portugal. The  
glory of the nation was eclipsed; her independence did not long  
survive; and all the future seemed pregnant with calamity  
and disaster. It is conjectured that not only the king, but  
whatever other friends had stood between the poet and abso-  
lute want, had fallen in this fatal battle. He was seized with a  
fever. 'Who would have believed,' said he, 'that on so



small a theatre as this wretched couch fortune would delight in exhibiting so many calamities? And I, as if they were not sufficient, make myself her ally; for to attempt resisting such misery would appear but vain impertinence.' The month and day of his decease are alike unknown. 'I saw him die,' says a monk who watched his last hours, 'in an hospital at Lisbon, without having a shroud to cover his remains, after having sailed 5500 leagues, and having borne arms victoriously in India—a warning for those who weary themselves by studying day and night without profit, as the spider who spins his web to catch flies.' The year of his death was 1579, when he is supposed to have been fifty-five years of age. A nobleman supplied the sheet in which he was shrouded, and his body was removed for interment to the church of Santa Anna. But no tombstone marked the spot till sixteen years after his death, when Don Gonzalo Coutinho erected one with this inscription:—

HERE LIES LUIS DE CAMOENS,  
PRINCE OF THE POETS OF HIS TIME.  
HE LIVED POOR AND MISERABLE,  
AND THUS DIED  
IN THE YEAR MDLXXIX.  
DON GONÇALO COUTINHO ORDERED  
THIS STONE TO BE PLACED HERE,  
UNDER WHICH  
NO OTHER PERSON SHOULD BE BURIED.\*

The 'Lusiad' of Camoens is a heroic poem, but so different in the unity of the plan from all other heroic poems, that the best critics allow him to have struck out an entirely new path in the region of epopee, and thus fairly exempted his work from being judged by any known models. The title sufficiently denotes the nature of the subject. It is 'Os Lusíadas'—that is, 'The Poem of the Lusitanians or Portuguese;' and its design is to present a poetic

\* This admirable inscription runs thus in the Portuguese, as it is engraved on the stone itself:—

AQUI JAZ LUIS DE CAMÕES,  
PRINCEPE DOS POETAS DE SEU TEMPO,  
VIVEO POBRE E MISERAVELMENTE,  
E ASSI MORREO  
ANNO DE MDLXXIX.  
ESTA CAMPA LHE MANDA AQUI,  
POR D. GONÇALO COUTINHO,  
NA QUAL SE NÃO ENTERRARA  
Pessoa alguma.

and epic grouping of all the great and interesting events in the annals of Portugal. Camões, therefore, selected the discovery of the passage to India—the most brilliant point in Portuguese history—as the groundwork of the epic unity of his poem. But in that unity Vasco da Gama is merely the spindle round which the thread of the narrative is wound, and the interest is not centred in him more than in his companions. What are called the episodes, introduce various heroes, who shine with great lustre; and a very large portion, commonly called an episode, sketches in a poetic manner the ancient history of Portugal. But this belongs as essentially to the whole as any other part, and, strictly speaking, the ‘*Lusiad*’ has no episode, except the short story of the giant Adamastor. It should therefore, as a whole, be described as an epic picture of Portuguese glory, somewhat more than a mere gallery of poetic scenes, and somewhat less than a perfect epic. Unless the idea of the plan of the ‘*Lusiad*’ be thus correctly viewed the composition will appear in a false light.

It is necessary also to understand the epic machinery, as the poet himself would have it understood. Camões was too truly a poet to dispute with the claim of the marvellous and the supernatural. He supposed the existence of supernatural beings; but he was either accidentally less happy than Homer in his selection of machinery for a modern epic, or a deliberate producer of the Greek mythology as the most beautiful. The marvellous of mingling heathen mythology with the incidents of modern Christians was lessened, if not wholly removed, by the opinion generally entertained in his day, that the machinery of poetry was merely a poetic figure, and that all the heathen deities might be introduced as allegorical characters, by the same privilege which gives Cupid a place in the lyric compositions of Christian poets, without any offence either against theology or good taste. If this principle be admitted, the whole poem becomes not only singular, but singularly beautiful, particularly in some passages where the historical material thus blended with the mythological shines in the full light of poetry, as if suddenly ennobled by magic.

The ‘*Lusiad*’ assumes a mythological character immediately after the introductory stanza. Vasco da Gama has already doubled the cape, and is steering along the eastern coast of Africa. The gods assemble on Mount Olympus to deliberate on the fate of India. Venus and Bacchus form two parties—the former in favour of the Portuguese, the latter against them. Here, doubtless, the poet gratified his national pride; for Portugal was eminently the ‘land of love,’ and temperance in the use of wine was one of its brightest virtues. The squadron touches at several places on the African coast, and Vasco endeavours to form amicable relations

with the king of Mombaça. Bacchus transforms himself into a Mohammedan priest, and by exhibiting deceitful tokens of friendship, hopes to entrap and ruin the adventurers. But Venus discovers the artifice, appeals to Jove, and prevails to have Mercury sent to warn the hero of the snare that is laid for him. He proceeds to the African kingdom of Melinda, where he is hospitably received, and at the king's request relates the most interesting parts of the history of his native country, with a narrative of his own adventures, so far as they have gone. Having enlisted the king in his friendship, Vasco proceeds on his voyage with the pilot who is to conduct him over the great gulf which separates Africa from the Indies, and thus to show him the shortest route. But Bacchus now has recourse to the deities of the ocean, and visiting the palace of Neptune, he implores the divinities of his kingdom to assist in destroying the Portuguese fleet. This portion of the old mythology is described in picturesque and striking colours. The gods of the sea consent to let loose the winds and waves upon the daring navigators who have ventured to explore the secrets of the deep; but Venus, whose glowing star already rose above the horizon, summons her nymphs to attend her, adorning themselves with garlands of the sweetest flowers, to seduce the boisterous Winds. These powers, charmed with the blandishments of love, presently become calm; the ship-boy at the mast-head raises the cry of 'land!' while the pilot of Melinda announces that they are now approaching the kingdom of Calicut.

Vasco da Gama is favourably received by the Zamorim, or Prince of Calicut, who sends some of his officers to visit and inspect the ships. On this occasion Paulo da Gama, the brother of the admiral, gives an explanation of a number of historical tapestries which adorn the vessels, and thus has the poet an opportunity of furnishing a kind of supplement to the former narrative of Portuguese history. But Bacchus, not yet weary of acting in the character of a Mussulman, stirs up the jealousy of the Zamorim; the commercial treaty between Calicut and Portugal is set aside, and the expedition is again in danger of destruction. The great object of the voyage, however, has been attained; and Da Gama, escaping from all his perils, weighs anchor, and sets sail for Europe. During the homeward voyage, Venus prepares a voluptuous magic festival for the adventurers on an enchanted island in the great ocean, and the goddess Thetis becomes the bride of the admiral. Here the poet makes an opportunity of completing his picture of Portuguese glory. In the third and fourth cantos, he had related the political history of the country, and of its royal House; in the sixth and seventh, he had introduced the most

remarkable fictions and traditions attached to the lives of its heroes; and now a prophetic nymph is brought forward to describe the future achievements of the nation, from the period of Da Gama's expedition down to the times of Camoens. Thus is the 'Lusiad' rendered one of the noblest monuments ever raised to the national glory of any people.

From such a sketch as this of the contents of the 'Lusiad,' it is difficult to conceive how a poet, however gifted, could form a grand and beautiful whole on a plan so trivial and irregular. But, as Bouterwek remarks, the plan is like a scaffolding, surrounded and concealed by the majestic building, serving to connect its parts, yet having no share in producing the unity of the effect.

Among the most beautiful passages of the early history of Portugal are reckoned the tribute to the memory of Egaz Moniz, the Portuguese Regulus; the description of the battle of Ourique (A. D. 1139), which laid the foundation of the kingdom of Portugal; the picture of Queen Maria of Spain, imploring the Portuguese king, her father, to assist her husband against the Moors; and the narration of the tragical fate of Inez de Castro. The last is considered the most beautiful of all the beautiful passages in the 'Lusiad.' We transcribe the translation of it by Mr Mickle:—

"Twas thou, oh love, whose dreaded shafts control  
The hind's rude heart, and tear the hero's soul;  
Thou ruthless power, with bloodshed never cloyed,  
'Twas thou thy lovely votary destroyed!  
Thy thirst still burning for a deeper wo,  
In vain to thee the tears of beauty flow;  
The breast that feels thy purest flames divine,  
With spouting gore must bathe thy cruel shrine.  
Such thy dire triumphs!—Thou, oh nymph, the while,  
Prophetic of the god's unpitied guile,  
In tender scenes by love-sick fancy wrought,  
By fear oft shifted as by fancy brought,  
In sweet Mondego's ever-verdant bowers  
Languished away the slow and lonely hours.  
While now, as terror waked thy boding fears,  
The conscious stream received thy pearly tears;  
And now, as hope revived the brighter flame,  
Each echo sighed thy princely lover's name.  
Nor less could absence from thy prince remove  
The dear remembrance of his distant love:  
Thy looks, thy smiles, before him ever glow,  
And o'er his melting heart endearing flow;  
By night his slumbers bring thee to his arms,  
By day his thoughts still wander o'er thy charms:  
By night, by day, each thought thy loves employ,  
Each thought the memory or the hope of joy.



Though fairest princely dames invoked his love,  
 No princely dame his constant faith could move;  
 For thee alone his constant passion burned,  
 For thee the proffered royal maids he scorned.  
 Ah, hope of bliss too high—the princely dames  
 Refused, dread rage the father's breast inflames;  
 He with an old man's wintry eye surveys  
 The youth's fond love, and coldly with it weighs  
 The people's murmurs of his son's delay  
 To bless the nation with his nuptial day.  
 (Alas! the nuptial day was past, unknown,  
 Which but, when crowned, the prince could dare to own.)  
 And with the fair one's blood the vengeful sire  
 Resolves to quench his Pedro's faithful fire.  
 Oh thou dread sword, oft stained with heroes' gore,  
 Thou awful terror of the prostrate Moor!  
 What rage could aim thee at a female breast,  
 Unarmed by softness, and by love possessed?

Dragg'd from her bower by murderous ruffian hands,  
 Before the frowning king fair Iñez stands;  
 Her tears of artless innocence, her air  
 So mild, so lovely, and her face so fair,  
 Moved the stern monarch; when, with eager zeal,  
 Her fierce destroyers urged the public weal;  
 Dread rage again the tyrant's soul possessed,  
 And his dark brow his cruel thoughts confessed:  
 O'er her fair face a sudden paleness spread,  
 Her throbbing heart with generous anguish bled,  
 Anguish to view her lover's hopeless woes,  
 And all the mother in her bosom rose.  
 Her beauteous eyes, in trembling tear-drops drowned  
 To heaven she lifted, but her hands were bound;  
 Then on her infants turned the piteous glance,  
 The look of bleeding wo; the babes advance,  
 Smiling in innocence of infant age,  
 Unawed, unconscious of their grandsire's rage;  
 To whom, as bursting sorrow gave the flow,  
 The native heart-sprung eloquence of wo,  
 The lovely captive thus: "Oh monarch, hear,  
 If e'er to thee the name of man was dear,  
 If prowling tigers, or the wolf's wild brood,  
 Inspired by nature with the lust of blood,  
 Have yet been moved the weeping babe to spare,  
 Nor left, but tended with a nurse's care,  
 As Rome's great founders to the world were given;  
 Wilt thou, who wear'st the sacred stamp of Heaven—  
 The human form divine—wilt thou deny  
 That aid, that pity, which e'en beasts supply?"

Oh that thy heart were, as thy looks declare,  
 Of human mould, suppliant were my prayer!  
 Thou couldst not, then, a helpless damsel stay,  
 Whose sole offence in fond affection lay,  
 In faith to him who first his love confessed,  
 Who first to love allured her virgin breast.  
 In these, my babes, wilt thou thine image see,  
 And still tremendous hunt thy rage on me!  
 Me, for their sakes, if yet thou wilt not spare,  
 Oh let these infants prove thy pious care!  
 Yet pity's lenient current ever flows  
 From that brave breast where genuine valour glows;  
 That thou art lenient, let vanquished Afric tell,  
 Then let thy pity o'er mine anguish swell;  
 Ah, let my woe, unconscious of a crime,  
 Procure mine exile to some barbarous clime:  
 Give me to wander o'er the burning plains  
 Of Libya's deserts, or the wild domains  
 Of Scythia's snow-clad rocks and frozen shore;  
 There let me, hopeless of return, deplore.  
 Where ghastly horror fills the dreary vale,  
 Where shrieks and howlings die on every gale,  
 The lions' roaring and the tigers' yell,  
 There, with mine infant race, consigned to dwell,  
 There let me try that pity soft to find,  
 In vain by me implored from human kind:  
 There, in some dreary cavern's rocky womb,  
 Amid the horrors of sepulchral gloom,  
 For him whose love I mourn, my love shall glow,  
 The sigh shall murmur and the tear shall flow:  
 All my fond wish, and all my hope, to rear  
 These infant pledges of a love so dear—  
 Amidst my griefs, a soothing, glad employ;  
 Amidst my fears, a woful hopeless joy."

In tears she uttered. As the frozen snow,  
 Touched by the spring's mild ray, begins to flow,  
 So just began to melt his stubborn soul,  
 So mild-rayed pity o'er the tyrant stole.  
 But destiny forbade: with eager zeal,  
 Again pretended for the public weal,  
 Her fierce accusers urged her speedy doom;  
 Again dark rage diffused its horrid gloom  
 O'er stern Alonzo's brow: swift at the sign  
 Their swords unsheathed around her brandished shine.  
 Oh, foul disgrace, of knighthood lasting stain,  
 By men-of-arms a helpless lady slain!

Thus Pyrrhus, burning with unmanly ire,  
 Fulfilled the mandate of his furious sire;

Disdainful of the frantic matron's prayer,  
 On fair Polyxena, her last fond care,  
 He rushed, his blade yet warm with Priam's gore,  
 And dashed the daughter on the sacred floor;  
 While mildly she her raving mother eyed,  
 Resigned her bosom to the sword, and died!  
 Thus Iñez, while her eyes to heaven appeal,  
 Resigns her bosom to the murdering steel;  
 That snowy neck whose matchless form sustained  
 The loveliest face where all the graces reigned,  
 Whose charms so long the gallant prince inflamed,  
 That her pale corse was Lisboa's queen proclaimed;  
 That snowy neck was stained with spouting gore,  
 Another sword her lovely bosom tore.  
 The flowers that glistened with her tears bedewed,  
 Nor shrunk and languished with her blood imbrued.  
 As when a rose erewhile of bloom so gay,  
 Thrown from the careless virgin's breast away,  
 Lies faded on the plain, the living red,  
 The snowy white, and all its fragrance fled,  
 So from her cheeks the roses died away,  
 And pale in death the beauteous Iñez lay.  
 With dreadful smiles, and crimsoned with her blood,  
 Round the wan victim the stern murderers stood,  
 Unmindful of the sure, though future hour,  
 Sacred to vengeance, and her lover's power.

Oh sun, couldst thou so foul a crime behold,  
 Nor veil thine head in darkness as of old,  
 A sudden night unwonted horror cast  
 O'er that dire banquet, where the sire's repast  
 The son's torn limbs supplied? Yet you, ye vales!  
 Ye distant forests, and ye flowery dales!  
 When pale and sinking to the dreadful fall,  
 You heard your quivering lips on Pedro call;  
 Your faithful echoes caught the parting sound,  
 And Pedro!—Pedro!—mournful, sighed around.  
 Nor less the wood-nymphs of Mondego's groves  
 Bewailed the memory of her hapless loves:  
 Her griefs they wept, and to a plaintive rill  
 Transformed their tears, which weeps and murmurs still.  
 To give immortal pity to her wo,  
 They taught the rivulet through her bowers to flow,  
 And still through violet beds the fountain pours  
 Its plaintive wailing, and is named Amours.  
 Nor long her blood for vengeance cried in vain:  
 Her gallant lord begins his awful reign.  
 In vain her murderers for refuge fly,  
 Spain's wildest hills no place of rest supply.





The next proud fleet that through my drear domain,  
 With daring search shall hoist the streaming vane,  
 That gallant navy by my whirlwinds tossed,  
 And raging seas, shall perish on my coast:  
 Then he who first my secret reign desried,  
 A naked corse wide-floating o'er the tide  
 Shall drive.\* Unless my heart's full raptures fail,  
 Oh, Lusua! oft shalt thou thy children wail;  
 Each year thy shipwrecked sons shalt thou deplore,  
 Each year thy sheeted masts shall strew my shore.

"With trophies plumed, behold a hero come;  
 Ye dreary wilds, prepare his yawning tomb!  
 Though smiling fortune blessed his youthful morn,  
 Though glory's rays his laurelled brows adorn,  
 Full oft though he beheld with sparkling eye  
 The Turkish moons in wild confusion fly,  
 While he, proud victor, thundered in the rear—  
 All, all his mighty fame shall vanish here.  
 Quiloo's sons, and thine Mombaze, shall see  
 Their conqueror bend his laurelled head to me;  
 While proudly mingling with the tempest's sound,  
 Their shouts of joy from every cliff rebound.†

"The howling blast, ye slumbering storms, prepare!  
 A youthful lover and his beauteous fair  
 Triumphant sail from India's ravaged land—  
 His evil angel leads him to my strand.  
 Through the torn hulk the dashing waves shall roar,  
 The shattered wrecks shall blacken all my shore.  
 Themselves escaped, despoiled by savage hands,  
 Shall naked wander o'er the burning sands,  
 Spared by the waves for deeper woes to bear,  
 Woes even by me acknowledged with a tear.  
 Their infant race, the promised heirs of joy,  
 Shall now no more a hundred hands employ;  
 By cruel want, beneath the parents' eye,  
 In these wide wastes their infant race shall die.  
 Through dreary wilds where never pilgrim trod,  
 Where caverns yawn, and rocky fragments nod,  
 The hapless lover and his bride shall stray,  
 By night unsheltered, and forlorn by day.  
 In vain the lover o'er the trackless plain  
 Shall dart his eyes, and cheer his spouse in vain.  
 Her tender limbs, and breast of mountain snow,  
 Where ne'er before intruding blast might blow,

\* Bartolomeo Diaz, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope before the time of Vasco da Gama, but perished there with three vessels in the expedition of Alvarez Cabral, the year 1500.

† Francisco d'Almeida, first viceroy of the Indies, who was killed by the Kaffres at the Cape in the year 1502.

Parched by the sun, and shrivelled by the cold  
Of dewy night, shall he, fond man! behold.  
Thus wandering wide, a thousand ills o'erpast,  
In fond embraces they shall sink at last;  
While pitying tears their dying eyes o'erflow,  
And the last sigh shall wail each other's wo.\*

"Some few, the sad companions of their fate,  
Shall yet survive, protected by my hate,  
On Tagus' banks the dismal tale to tell,  
How, blasted by my frown, your heroes fell!"

He paused, in act still further to disclose  
A long, a dreary prophecy of woes:  
When, springing onward, loud my voice resounds,  
And midst his rage the threatening shade confounds:  
"What art thou, horrid form, that rid'st the air?  
By Heaven's eternal light, stern fiend, declare!"  
His lips he writhes, his eyes far round he throws,  
And from his breast deep hollow groans arose;  
Sternly askance he stood; with wounded pride  
And anguish torn: "In me behold," he cried,  
While dark-red sparkles from his eyeballs rolled,  
"In me the Spirit of the Cape behold,  
That rock by you the Cape of Tempests named,†  
By Neptune's rage in horrid earthquakes framed,  
When Jove's red bolts o'er Titan's offspring flamed. }  
With wide-stretched piles I guard the pathless strand,  
And Afric's southern mound unmoved I stand:  
Nor Roman prow, nor daring Tyrian oar,  
E'er dashed the white wave foaming to my shore;  
Nor Greece, nor Carthage, ever spread the sail  
On these, my seas, to catch the trading gale.  
You, you alone, have dared to plough my main,  
And with the human voice disturb my lonesome reign."

He spoke, and deep a lengthened sigh he drew,  
A doleful sound, and vanished from the view;  
The frightened billows gave a rolling swell,  
And distant far prolonged the dismal yell;  
Faint and more faint the howling echoes die,  
And the black cloud dispersing leaves the sky.  
High to the angel host whose guardian care  
Had ever round us watched, my hands I rear,

\* Manuel de Souza and his wife.

† The Cape of Good Hope was first doubled by Diaz, a Portuguese navigator, A.D. 1493, and called by him *Cabo Tormentoso* (Stormy Cape.) On his return to Portugal, however, King John, who had sent out the expedition, finding that the coast turned to the East, changed the name to *Cabo di Buena Esperanza* (Cape of Good Hope,) because he now hoped to reach the East Indies by sea.

And Heaven's dread King implore. As o'er our head  
The fiend dissolved, an empty shadow, fled ;  
So may his curses by the winds of heaven  
Far o'er the deep, their idle sport, be driven!

With sacred horror thrilled, Melinda's lord\*  
Held up the eager hand, and caught the word.  
"Oh, wondrous faith of ancient days," he cries,  
"Concealed in mystic lore and dark disguise!  
Taught by their sires, our hoary fathers tell,  
On these rude shores a giant spectre fell,  
What time from heaven the rebel band were thrown ;  
And oft the wandering swain has heard his moan.  
While o'er the wave the clouded moon appears  
To hide her weeping face, his voice he hears  
O'er the wild storm. Deep in the days of yore  
A holy pilgrim trod the mighty shore ;  
Stern groans he heard ; by ghostly spells controlled,  
His fate, mysterious, thus the spectre told :—

'By forceful Titan's warm embrace compressed,  
The rock-ribbed mother-earth his love confessed.  
The hundred-handed giant at a birth  
And me she bore : nor slept my hopes on earth ;  
My heart avowed my sire's ethereal flame :  
Great Adamastor, then, my dreaded name.  
In my bold brother's glorious toils engaged,  
Tremendous war against the gods I waged :  
Yet not to reach the throne of Heaven I try,  
With mountain piled on mountain to the sky :  
To me the conquest of the seas befell,  
In his green realm the second Jove to quell.  
Nor did ambition all my passions hold ;  
'Twas love that prompted an attempt so bold.  
Ah me ! One summer, in the cool of day,  
I saw the Nereids on the sandy bay  
With lovely Thetis from the wave advance  
In mirthful frolic and the naked dance.  
In all her charms revealed the goddess trode ;  
With fiercest fires my struggling bosom glowed ;  
Yet, yet I feel them burning in my heart,  
And hopeless languish with the raging smart.  
For her each goddess of the heavens I scorned,  
For her alone my fervent ardour burned.  
In vain I wooed her to the lover's bed ;  
From my grim form with horror mute she fled.  
Maddening with love, by force I ween to gain  
The silver goddess of the blue domain :

\* The story of the metamorphosis of Adamastor, which Mickle in this passage assigns to the king of Melinda, is told in the original by the apparition himself.





Yon dark-browed cape of monstrous size became,  
Where round me still, in triumph o'er my shame,  
The silvery Thetis bids her surges roar,  
And waft my groans along the dreary shore.'"

All the passages above-referred to are in the first five cantos. The other five abound in classically-beautiful passages; but the want of a rising interest weakens the epic character, and makes the second half of the poem appear, as a whole, a falling off from the first. We must not omit to notice the concluding verses:—

'Enough, my Muse, thy wearied wing no more  
Must to the seat of Jove triumphant soar.  
Chilled by my nation's cold neglect, thy fires  
Glow now no more, and all thy rage expires.  
Yet thou, Sebastian—thou, my king, attend:  
Behold what glories on thy throne descend!  
Shall haughty Gaul, or sterner Albion boast  
That all the Lusian fame in thee is lost!  
Oh be it thine these glories to renew,  
And John's bold path, and Pedro's course pursue!  
Snatch from the tyrant noble's hand the sword,  
And be the rights of humankind restored.  
The statesman-prelate to his vows confine,  
Alone auspicious at the holy shrine;  
The priest, in whose meek heart Heaven pours its fires,  
Alone to Heaven, not earth's vain pomp, aspires.  
Nor let the Muse, great king, on Tago's shore,  
In dying notes the barbarous age deplore.  
The king or hero to the Muse unjust,  
Sinks as the nameless slave, extinct in dust.  
But such the deeds thy radiant morn portends:  
Awed by thy frown, even now old Atlas bends  
His hoary head, and Ampeluz's fields  
Expect thy sounding steeds and rattling shields.  
And shall these deeds unsung, unknown, expire?  
Oh would thy smiles relume my fainting ire!  
I then inspired, the wondering world should see  
Great Ammon's warlike son revived in thee;  
Revived, unenvied of the Muse's flame,  
That o'er the world resounds Pelides' name.'

The other works of Camoens appear but secondary effusions of genius, and were thus regarded by the poet himself. In every species of composition practised in his age and country, Camoens has left specimens of considerable merit; and in some of these his style has fixed that of his successors. So preponderating, indeed, is the authority which has ever been conceded to his

## PORTUGUESE LITERATURE.

with the other Portuguese writers would select a model in any particular kind of poetry, they invariably turn first to Camoens; and even the practice of judging everything by this standard, they have occasionally been unjust to the merits of those who have ventured to depart from the path traced out by him. In the poetry of Camoens the national style is combined with simplicity and elegance, exactly in the manner that suited the taste of the Portuguese; and that taste has never risen above the degree of cultivation which was attained by this poet. An attention only, therefore, of his various compositions, is sufficient to afford a correct and comprehensive view of the whole range of Portuguese poetry in its best days. It appears that he never composed his miscellaneous poems, and many of them may be lost, but some, it is said, were pirated by a contemporary.

In sonnets the imagination of Camoens was particularly prolific. He would think that he had, like Tasso, made it the rule of his life to write sonnets as long as he could write anything. Of the three hundred and one that have been preserved, the greater number are amatory; a few also are moral and religious. The following is translated by Lord Strangford:—

While on the margin of his native shores,  
 In death's cold hour the silver cygnet lies,  
 Not melodies of war, and martial sighs,  
 And lamentations wild he plaintive pours,  
 Still charmed of life; and whilst he yet deplores  
 The drear, dark night that seals his closing eyes,  
 It murmurs glad for lost existence—dies!  
 O lady, thou whom still my soul adores,  
 While scarcely lingering in a world of pain,  
 My weary spirit treads the verge of death—  
 O lady, then, thy poet's parting breath  
 Shall faintly animate his final song,  
 To tell of broken vows, and cold disdain,  
 And unrequited love, and cruel wrong!"

The sonnets of Camoens are succeeded by seventeen *canções* (songs), which show how deeply the author had imbibed the spirit of the Petrarchal poetry. The odes which follow approximate more nearly to the ancient style of Portuguese verse. But the twenty-one elegies are perhaps, next to the 'Lusiad,' the most worthy of attention. Here the personal character of the poet most frequently appears; his romantic soul is unveiled; his feelings are poured forth without restraint; the reader's sympathy for his misfortunes is powerfully excited, and he can scarcely help loving as well as pitying the man, in spite of the faults with which it is to be feared his moral character was clouded:—

## Part of the Third Elegy.

'When that sweet bard, to whose harmonious hand  
 Love's golden harp in softest warblings sighed,  
 By stars unkind was too severely tried,  
 And forced anon from Rome's parental land,  
 To pace with weary step the Pontic strand;  
 What a cold rush of recollections came  
 Across the exile's sad and sinking mind,  
 When memory drew the joys he left behind!  
 Her, who so long had fanned his chaster flame—  
 His babes, his home, and all that charmed before,  
 And all that blessed him once—but ne'er shall bless him more.  
 Poor banished wretch! he had no powers to bear  
 The vast unutterable pangs of thought;  
 But still in woods, and wilds, and caverns sought  
 A secret covert from the murderer's Care:  
 Now slowly wandering through the midnight air,  
 In thorny dell he roams, or pathless grove,  
 While vainly sings the mellow nightingale,  
 Unheard by him, although she chant a tale  
 So like his own—so sad, so full of love—  
 Closed are his ears, and dim his moistened eyes,  
 That view with dull regard the cold and starry skies.'

Among the minor poems of Camoens, eclogues occupy a considerable space, but they do not equal the pure pastoral of Saa de Miranda. A number of small pieces, in almost every form of ancient lyric verse, prove his attachment to everything that was Portuguese. The same feeling doubtless induced him to compose dramas which are valuable, were they regarded in no other point of view than as evidences of the extreme versatility of the poet's genius. He made no attempt to supplant the popular drama of his country, however rude; and the path in which he trod is the same that was opened by the Spanish dramatist Naharro. It is clear, however, that the talent of Camoens had no decided bias towards this department of literature. Bouterwek says, that had the genius which animates the '*Lusiad*' taken a dramatic direction, Camoens would have been the Calderon of Portugal before a Lope had appeared in Spain. However this may be, none of the three comedies of Camoens can be pronounced worthy of the reputation of their author; and it is unjust to dwell on the imperfect efforts of a poet who produced masterpieces in other departments.

## DRAMATIC POETRY.

## GIL VICENTE.

If Portugal has gained a triumph over Spain by furnishing a specimen of epic poetry, the drama with which Spain is so abundantly supplied is almost a barren field in Portuguese literature. A few pieces appeared at various times, but they seem rather to be essays after the ancient classics, than plays composed with a view to the wants of the nation. Their theatrical success was very temporary, and the stage of Lisbon has been occupied almost exclusively by the Italian opera and Spanish comedy. Only one poet of any name has written in the Portuguese spirit. This is Gil Vicente, who has been styled the Plautus of Portugal.

The exact date of Vicente's birth is not recorded, but it is supposed to have been within the last twenty years of the fifteenth century. He studied law, in compliance with the wishes of his parents, but speedily abandoned it, in order to give his whole attention to the dramatic art. It is not clear whether he was regularly salaried by the king, but he resided constantly at the court, and was employed in providing occasional pieces for its civil and religious festivities. His earliest productions were represented at the court of Emmanuel, but his reputation became still more brilliant in the reign of John III., who did not scruple himself to perform a part on the stage. It is probable that the poet was himself an actor; and it is certain that he educated for the stage his own daughter Paula, who was a maid of honour to the Princess Maria, and equally celebrated as an actress, a poetess, and a musician. There are no records extant by which farther insight might be obtained into the personal character or history of Gil Vicente. He died at Evora in the year 1557, and, as is supposed, at an advanced age. Five years after his death, a complete edition of his works was published by his son.

Vicente in Portugal was contemporary with Naharro in Spain; and whatever there may once have been, there can now be found no relic of this or any other Spanish dramatist of so early an age. But there remains a piece in the Castilian language, written by Vicente to celebrate the birthday of Prince John in 1504, whence *it has been concluded* by some that his works were the models on



which Lope de Vega and Calderon formed their more perfect comedies nearly a century afterwards, and that the Portuguese nation may claim the honour of having instructed the Spanish in the dramatic art.

The dramas of Vicente are arranged in four classes—autos, comedies, tragi-comedies, and farces. The autos, or religious pieces, were written chiefly to furnish entertainment for the court on Christmas night, and they seem to correspond well with the object in view. The shepherds naturally had an important part assigned them, and the whole was pervaded by the pastoral feeling, which distinguishes them remarkably from the Spanish autos. Bouterwek gives a sufficiently characteristic sketch of one of these pieces :—

Mercury enters as an allegorical character, representing the planet, and explains in redondillas the theory of the solar system, and the orbits of the spheres. Next appears a seraph, sent from Heaven in answer to the prayers of Time, and he proclaims a grand fair to be held in honour of the holy Virgin, inviting purchasers to resort to it. The devil next appears as a pedlar, carrying a stall before him, and arguing against the seraph, that he shall be the most successful in obtaining customers for his wares. Rome, as the representative of the church, comes forward at the summons of Mercury, to display her commodities, of which the most costly is peace of conscience; but the fiend opposes, and Rome is obliged to retire. The crowd increases: two Portuguese peasants enter the market, of whom one is anxious to sell his wife, or even to give her for nothing, for he says she is a mere spendthrift. In another part of the throng are numerous female rustics, one of whom inveighs bitterly against her husband, who 'robs her garden of the fruit before it is ripe, and leads a sottish, useless life.' The former complainer instantly recognises her, and exclaims, 'That is my slippery helpmate!' Lucifer proceeds to offer his merchandise to the female peasants; but, just as a bargain is about to be closed, one of them, more pious than the rest, smells the brimstone, and exclaims, 'Jesus, Jesus! true God and true man!' on which Old Nick takes his flight, and returns no more. The seraph again comes forward, mingling in the crowd, which is rapidly augmenting by the arrival of country women, carrying baskets on their heads, filled with the produce of their gardens and poultry-yards. The seraph offers them a fine assortment of virtues; but none of them will buy, for they say that they 'will get husbands faster by having money than all the virtues he can furnish.' One of the party, however, declares that she came to the fair for gifts of grace, which she is certain the Virgin at this holy festival will bestow without money and with-

our price. This observation means the meaning of the theology to be brought out, and the dramatic intention here is in honour of the Virgin.

The comedies of Gil Vicente are his most important: a kind of dramatic novel similar to those of Spain, but without plot and development. The tragicomedies are rather outlines of that kind of drama which afterwards formed a variety of the heroic comedies of Spain. They are not wanting in poetic scenes, but none of them are historical. Doubtless the best productions of this author are his farsas, which approach much more to the style of true comedy than the tragicomedies under that name. However rude and imperfect were these efforts, it never occurred a dramatic writer with greater courage than the Portuguese. In the time of Gil Vicente there existed no dramatic works in any language exhibiting more sterling poetical invention, more brilliancy of colouring, or greater truth than his farsas. But the Portuguese staid themselves with such a profoundly so pastoral poetry, and nothing could be more contrary to dramatic life than the larger, sentimental, and romantic popular or the eulogies.

Sancho Miranda took in a very different path from Gil Vicente. He was desirous of confining on his country a classical drama similar to that of the Romans, and as that patronised by Leo X. in Italy. Among other poems he produced two small comedies, which were the first of the kind that had appeared in Portugal. The king was so pleased with them, that they were represented at his court, and printed by his command. But Miranda was born a pastoral poet, and made himself a dramatic only by imitation.

Ferreira belonged to the same school. He wrote a tragedy and two comedies. The subject of the former is the well-known story of Elise in Castile, and it is very similar, but sensibly inferior, to the contemporaneous one on the same theme by Boscovich the Spanish historian.

The pains never rendered by the court on the drama of Sancho Miranda and Ferreira may be considered as one great obstacle which arose to prevent the formation of a national drama in Portugal. It was now much more difficult to raise a popular party that would, as in Spain, raise some talented poet to advance in the path opened by Vicente. Thus the dramatic art wavered amidst heterogeneous forms till the few pieces which appeared in the vernacular became mere imitations of the Spanish, and the name of Ferreira was remembered only by the learned.

## ROMANTIC AND HISTORICAL PROSE.

## RODRIGUEZ LOBO.

After Camoens, Saa de Miranda, and Ferreira, the language and literature of Portugal are indebted to no other writer so much as to Rodriguez Lobo. The history of Portuguese eloquence may be said to commence with him, for he laid so good a foundation for the cultivation of a pure prose style, that in every effort to attain classic perfection subsequent writers have merely followed in his steps. His verse is noway inferior to his prose, and he is considered as entitled to rank in every respect next to Camoens and Saa de Miranda.

Little is known of the life of Lobo, except that he was born in the town of Leiria, in Portuguese Estramadura, about the middle of the sixteenth century; that he distinguished himself by his talents and industry at the university; that he afterwards lived chiefly in the country; and that he was drowned in crossing the Tagus, which he had so often celebrated in his poems. His remains were buried in the church of a convent near the spot where they were washed on shore.

The writings of Lobo are susceptible of three divisions approximating each other. First, his prose work entitled 'The Court in the Country,' into which no verses are introduced; then three pastoral romances, where passages in prose are the connecting links by which a whole is completed; the third entirely of miscellaneous poems. In 'The Court in the Country,' or 'Evenings in Winter,' Lobo collects around him a party of friends in a rural mansion, and they converse together upon the most suitable education for an elegant man of the world. Their first topic is literature, embracing, among other things, the selection of a gentleman's library, and the cultivation of elegant letter-writing; afterwards etiquette and manners, social eloquence, wit, and gallantry, are successively discussed; the dialogue and didactic passages being interspersed with tales and anecdotes. In our day the merest novice in politeness may smile at the grave discussion of principles perfectly familiar to him; but we must judge of a work of this kind in connection with the age in which it was written, and not expect anything new on the subject of

education and manners from a Portuguese of the sixteenth century.

There was a poet the first to make his countrymen acquainted with the spirit of genuine and cultivated prose, and to elevate the language of common life without confounding the boundaries of poetic and prose composition. The work by which he thus enlarged the sphere of his country's literature deserves to hold no mean place in its history.

Among the poetic works of Lobo appears a whole series of letters and historic romances, which were written by way of ridiculing that species of composition. Our author treats them as coarse trash; Spain, and then concludes, what otherwise would have remained doubtful, that this kind of romance was never introduced in Portugal.

#### CONDOMINIO WOMAN.

Lobo stood alone in the sixteenth century in his efforts to improve the taste of his country. Gonçalves, meanwhile, had introduced bombast and metaphorical absurdity, and no writer of common sense or stronger & more natural and dignified style till the end of the seventeenth century. No information respecting the *Condominio Woman* has been preserved, except that which is afforded by her book entitled 'The Elegant Evening Walk, or the Improvement of Bad Manners.' The plan is similar to that of 'The Court in the Country,' but the composition evinces a much higher degree of interest. In the party of elegant women are introduced, and between them and the elegant young gentlemen there are attachments formed, and they love and oppose each other. These elegant ladies and gentlemen play, read stories, and converse by turns. The scene is upon the whole both graceful and natural; and the serious determination of the writer to smother clear common sense, is obvious from his spiced preface, in which he says in the Latin of his paternoster, 'But deliver us from pompous ornament.' A man who could so express himself in this age of pompous ornament, deserves, were it on that account alone, to be distinguished in the history of polite literature.



## BARROS—BRITO.

The historical works composed in the sixteenth century had risen little above the rudeness of the chronicle, and no Diego de Mendoza had been translated into a sphere where he might have learned to conceive justly of the historic art. Yet the men who, either of their own accord, or as the salaried chroniclers of the court, undertook to relate the history of their country, and especially of her Oriental discoveries and conquests, were inspired with ardent patriotic feeling, and freely communicated it to their records. Foremost among them stands João de Barros, whose name is not altogether unknown in literature beyond the precincts of his native country. In the early part of the sixteenth century, his talents and acquirements were pre-eminent among the young men who were brought up about the court of Emmanuel the Great. A chivalric romance, the production of his twenty-first year, came under the eye of the monarch, who discerned in it the youthful author's talent for historical composition, and commissioned him to prepare a narrative of the conquests and discoveries of the Portuguese in India. This work he immediately commenced, and continued it in the reign of John III., who bestowed on him the lucrative appointment of treasurer to the Indian department. Barros took Livy for his model, and though he cannot claim a rank even near that historian, yet are his labours worthy of honourable notice in this place.

India was the favourite topic of Portuguese historians, and several similar, but inferior works to that of Barros, appeared in the same age.

Bernardine de Brito, who flourished early in the seventeenth century, possessed a much higher degree of historical cultivation. He was educated at Rome, and had acquired several of the modern languages. He devoted himself to the cloister, but, following his predilection for Portuguese history, he undertook the task of compiling one, in the capacity of authorised chronicler of his convent. He died in the year 1617, without having completed the object of his fond ambition. His '*Monarchia Lusitana*' was intended to be a complete history of the country now called Portugal, from the most remote antiquity till the author's own time; and it is probable that he desired it to rank as a companion to the Spanish work of Florian de Ocampo. But whereas Ocampo's narration began from the Deluge, Brito did not consider that sufficiently remote, and started from the Creation of the World. The first volume, a thick folio, brings the history down to the birth of Christ; and the second and last breaks off

... history of modern Portugal commences. It is distinguished for style and descriptive talent; the ... striking, and indicate the pupil of the ... departments of prose composition ... neglected. A few moral ... but they were written chiefly ... was generally chosen by Portuguese ... works, while the Portuguese ... of literature.

#### PORTUGUESE LITERATURE IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES.

... century, the most brilliant ... away, and no new era ... and the most dexterous ... from the preced- ... which Portugal ... immediate injury ... scarcely attain ...—so neither ... produce any ... glowed no ... of reconquering ... was the only ... enterprise was ... the nation: ... gradation; and ... of the com- ... influence ... and civil and ... both countries, ... its degrading

... filled up ... was exhausting ... will scarcely ... is informed ... these summaries, alone ... the the announces the collection

as designed to celebrate 'the penetrating shafts of love which were shot from a pair of heavenly eyes, and which, after inflicting immortal wounds, issued triumphant from the poet's breast.'

Prose composition during the seventeenth century would present an utter blank, had not a man arisen who successfully pursued the path marked out by Barros and Brito. This author, who must be regarded as unique in his age, was Jacinto Freire da Andrade. He wrote a number of burlesque poems, in which the florid style of the disciples of Gongora are treated in a very happy vein of wit and ridicule. But he acquired still higher reputation by his life of Don João de Castro, fourth viceroy of the Indies. It was translated into several languages, and was at one time esteemed a masterpiece of biographical composition. Andrade relates the exploits of his hero with dignity and simplicity, and has given immortality to a characteristic enough story of a pledged moustache:—

'De Castro had occasion to rebuild a fortress that had been destroyed in his war with the king of Cambaya. But the royal treasures were exhausted; there were no means of paying either the soldiers or the labourers; and the Portuguese merchants at Goa were unwilling to give credit to De Castro, having been frequently deceived by his predecessors. The viceroy endeavoured to disinter the bones of his son, who had been slain in the late conflict, and to send them to the merchants as a pledge that he would perform his engagements if they would advance the money. But the precious remains could not be found: the fiery climate had reduced them to dust. He then cut off one of his moustaches: "I have no pledge," said he, "which I can now call mine except my own beard, which I now commit to you, for you must be aware that I have neither gold, nor silver, nor aught else of value, except a short and dry sincerity which the Lord my God has given me." Upon this pledge João de Castro obtained the money he required; and his moustache, which was afterwards redeemed by his family, is still preserved as a monument of his patriotism.'

In the eighteenth century the influence of French taste crept quietly into the literature as well as the manners of the Portuguese nation, producing neither conflict, as in Spain, nor anything like a revolution. During the former half of it the government made several efforts for a revival. Royal Academies of History and Languages, similar to those of Spain, were founded; but neither of them fulfilled the expectations that were entertained concerning them. The Academy of Sciences, however, has been much more useful. So far as its influence has extended, it has given the right direction to the national mind; and since the year 1792, it has not confined itself wholly to science, but has exercised

an influence over literary taste, giving birth to many excellent philological and critical treatises.

About the year 1730 the nation seemed on the eve of possessing a drama of its own. An illiterate and obscure Jew, of the name of Antonio Josè, composed a number of comic operas with all the showy attractions of the Italian, but in the vernacular tongue, which had long been banished from the theatre of Lisbon. In spite of much coarseness, the vein of genuine humour and familiar gaiety which now gave life to the Portuguese stage excited the greatest enthusiasm, and for ten years the theatre was crowded with delighted audiences. But the Jew was seized, and burnt by order of the Inquisition at the last *auto da fe*, which took place in the year 1745, and the theatre was closed.

It is high time, however, that reflection should take the place of mere effervescence. Little more can be expected from the spontaneous creative genius of the Peninsula, and its wisdom would be to set itself in good earnest to make advances in useful knowledge and intellectual cultivation. The political convulsions which have distracted both kingdoms during the present century have been sadly unfavourable to the course of study and self-improvement which must be prosecuted before either nation can hope to produce anything worthy of being introduced to English readers. It is said that the masses of the population in the Peninsula have sustained less moral injury by political revolution than those of the rival countries of Europe, and that they are still the honourable and high-minded people that they were ages ago. It is believed, too, that they are now thoroughly in love with political and religious freedom, and will be satisfied with nothing less than the enjoyment of complete emancipation from the fetters with which they were, till a few years ago, enthralled. If so, the Peninsula will doubtless again create a literature suitable to the national character. But it seems not unlikely that Brazil and Mexico may in this respect take the lead of the mother countries, and that the best productions of the nineteenth century may be found on the other side of the Atlantic.



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